

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

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The Department of Sociology offers programs leading to the Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees.

Sociologists investigate basic social processes and the causes and consequences of social change in a diverse and increasingly interconnected world. Sociology covers a broad range of topics, from the micro level to the macro level of society. Our undergraduate program offers concentrations in Crime, Law and Justice; Gender, Work and Family; Health, Medicine and Aging; and Social Inequality. Undergraduate majors may also choose a general sociology curriculum. Sociology's graduate program includes specializations in Sociology of Health and Medicine; Sociology of Age and the Life Course; Social Inequalities; and Research Methods.

Many sociology majors participate in field-based learning experiences in course work and also through their involvement in faculty research projects. We encourage interaction between students and faculty by offering many opportunities for individualized study and research. Our department has a long history of innovation and international leadership in research, combined with a friendly, student-centered culture, for both graduate and undergraduate students.

Especially with globalization and the increasing diversity of our society, many employers look favorably on the breadth of knowledge and perspective provided by majoring in sociology. For the same reasons, graduate programs in many fields, including medicine and law, also consider a background in sociology to be a strength. Graduates of our program are working in positions in research institutions, medicine, private industry, and the public sector.

Research Programs

Citizen Reentry Study

This four-year research project identifies men, mostly fathers, who are locked up in an alternative incarceration facility in Cleveland, Ohio, for no more than six months. We observe programs in the facility and run a study circles group, and then track men for up to a year after their release into the community. The study focuses on the ways that men are prepared for reentry, identifies the systemic barriers to reentry, examines how men negotiate the conditions and processes of reentry, and describes varying outcomes.

Cumulative Dis/Advantage Research Group: Health Disparities and Trajectories of Inequality Across the Life Course

Across many societies, inequalities among age peers in health, well-being, and resources exist throughout the life course, yet tend to grow more pronounced with age, so that inequalities and disparities tend to be the highest among older people, a pattern that repeats in each succeeding cohort of individuals. How does such intracohort inequality come about? What are its manifestations and consequences? The Cumulative Dis/Advantage (CDA) Research Group analyzes the social processes that create inequalities in well-being, resources and health,

with a focus on inequality-generating mechanisms of social stratification ranging from micro-level to macro-level forces such as social class and structural racism. The group also examines social policies that are intended to ameliorate these inequalities. Jessica Kelley examines health disparities, and especially the influence of social and economic circumstances over the life course on later-life health, with a focus on differences organized by race/ethnicity and disability. Dale Dannefer is interested in identifying basic sociological processes that contribute to CDA and understanding how they can be disrupted or ameliorated.

The Elderly Care Research Center

The Elderly Care Research Center (ECRC) conducts research projects focusing on theory-based and public policy-relevant issues in aging and medical sociology. It also sponsors the Journal of Elder Policy

Recent projects relate to physical and mental health outcomes of stress, coping, cancer survivorship, and adaptation to frailty in late life. Research projects have been funded by the National Institute on Aging (NIA), the National Cancer Institute (NCI), and the National Institute of Nursing Research. In addition to conducting quantitative surveys and in-depth qualitative interviews with community-dwelling elders, researchers at the ECRC also conducted an NCI-funded intervention to help elderly patients communicate more effectively with their doctors. Our research has also explored family assistance for children with autism

The ECRC has been the recipient of an NIA Merit Award for a long-term study of successful aging among residents of a retirement community. This research focused on health promotion, proactive adaptation, and maintenance of wellness in late life. ECRC serves as a laboratory for student research. Collaborative and cross-national research has involved colleagues from multiple disciplines at CWRU. Currently we collaborate on funded research with researchers from the FPB School of Nursing and the Medical School.

The Forest Hill Neighborhood Study

The Forest Hill Neighborhood Study aims to unpack the causes of racial residential preferences by examining what compels members of the middle class to live in a majority-black neighborhood. Research consistently demonstrates that non-blacks consider predominantly black neighborhoods to be the least desirable of all possible neighborhoods. This project focuses on the residents of the Forest Hill neighborhood of East Cleveland, with the goal of identifying the characteristics and features of majority-black neighborhoods that middle-class blacks and non-blacks find desirable. The study investigates how cultural and racial dispositions factor into participants' selection of a neighborhood. The study also compares the experiences of white residents to those of black residents and examines the history of the neighborhood, which, for most of its existence, excluded black homeowners.

The Return Solidarity Refugee Project

This study is based on life story interviews with men and women who were active in the democratic opposition movement in Poland during 1980-1981, persecuted during martial law, exiled in the West, and returned to Poland after the fall of communism. As witnesses to and participants in their country's historic transformation, members of this cohort have noteworthy social histories: they grew up in a communist country; participated in a national movement that challenged the regime; fled from political persecution and established new residences, occupations and lifestyles abroad; and returned to live in a liberal democratic system. This project analyzes the processes of becoming an activist, a migrant, and a

returnee. The findings from this study will contribute to the scholarship on transnationalism, return migration, and life course.

Department Faculty

Jessica Kelley, PhD
(Purdue University)

Professor and Chair

<https://sociology.case.edu/faculty/jessica-kelley-moore/>

Health disparities; sociology of disability; sociology of the life course; race/ethnicity; quantitative methods

Timothy Black, PhD
(University of Massachusetts-Amherst)

Professor

<https://sociology.case.edu/faculty/timothy-black/>

Social inequality; poverty; urban sociology; qualitative research methods

Cassi Pittman Claytor, PhD
(Harvard University)

Associate Professor

<https://sociology.case.edu/faculty/cassi-pittman/>

Race and ethnic relations; social stratification and inequality; sociology of consumption; economic sociology; qualitative methods

Dale Dannefer, PhD
(Rutgers University)

Selah Chamberlain Professor of Sociology

<https://sociology.case.edu/faculty/dale-dannefer/>

Age and the life course; social theory; social inequality and cumulative dis/advantage; research methods

Mary Patrice Erdmans, PhD
(Northwestern University)

Professor

<https://sociology.case.edu/faculty/mary-erdmans/>

Social inequality; race and ethnicity; immigration; qualitative research methods; gender

Brian Gran, JD, PhD
(Northwestern University; Indiana University-Bloomington)

Professor

<https://sociology.case.edu/faculty/brian-gran/>

Sociology of law; comparative sociology; health care policy; human rights

Susan W. Hinze, PhD
(Vanderbilt University)

Associate Professor

<https://sociology.case.edu/faculty/susan-hinze/>

Medical sociology; social inequality, sex and gender; work and family

Eva Kahana, PhD
(University of Chicago)

Distinguished University Professor and Pierce T. and Elizabeth D. Robson Professor of the Humanities

<https://sociology.case.edu/faculty/eva-kahana/>

Sociology of aging; medical sociology; social factors in stress and coping

Rebecca Anna Schut, PhD
(University of Pennsylvania)

Assistant Professor

<https://sociology.case.edu/faculty/rebecca-schut/>

Social demography; medical sociology; immigrant incorporation; racial stratification; work & compensation

Haoming Song, PhD
(Brown University)

Assistant Professor

<https://sociology.case.edu/faculty/haoming-song/>

Demography & life course; quantitative and computational methods; inequality; family, gender & sexuality

Visiting Faculty

Danielle Czarnecki, PhD
(University of Michigan)

Visiting Assistant Professor

<https://sociology.case.edu/faculty/danielle-czarnecki/>

Medical sociology; gender & sexuality; reproduction; religion; qualitative methods

Lecturer

Donald Hutcherson II, PhD
(The Ohio State University)

Full-time Lecturer

<https://sociology.case.edu/faculty/donald-hutcherson/>

Sociological research methods; social statistics; sociology over the life course; collective behavior; criminal & social justice; social class & social stratification; global stratification; race & ethnicity.

Secondary Faculty

Kurt Stange, MD, PhD
(University of North Carolina)

Professor, Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, School of Medicine

https://casemed.case.edu/fammed/faculty/Kurt_Stange.html

Epidemiology; preventive health care; biostatistics; disability prevention in the elderly

Adam T. Perzynski, PhD
(Case Western Reserve University)

Associate Professor, School of Medicine

<http://chrp.org/directory/name/adam-perzynski/>

Sociology of health and illness; qualitative and quantitative methods; health disparities; health informatics

Aloen Townsend, PhD
(University of Michigan)

Professor, Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences

<http://msass.case.edu/faculty/atownsend/>

Adult development and aging; research methods and statistics; mental health; families and formal service systems

Adjunct Faculty

Edward H. Thompson, Jr., PhD

(Case Western Reserve University)

Professor Emeritus, College of the Holy Cross

Aging and masculinities; families and later life; men's health; religion and health

Emeritus

Gary T. Deimling, PhD

(Bowling Green State University)

Emeritus Professor

<https://sociology.case.edu/faculty/gary-deimling/>

Medical sociology; sociology of aging; family sociology

Programs

- Gerontological Studies, BA
- Gerontological Studies, Minor
- Sociology, BA
- Sociology, MA
- Sociology, Minor
- Sociology, PhD

Dual Degrees

- Programs Toward Graduate or Professional Degrees