Sociology Department Research Apprenticeship Program
WI19 & SP19 Projects

Students interested in the Research Apprenticeship Program are required to apply to each project individually online.

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Asian American Student Achievement
Doreen Hsu

This project is about UCSD students who self-identify as Asian American in any way. I'm interested in these students' academic achievement in college, and how they think about their race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class. Through interviews and participant observations, I examine how students choose their majors, consider their futures, evaluate any stereotypes, and consider their own identities.

ASA Section(s)
- Asia and Asian America
- Education
- International Migration
- Organizations, Occupations & Work
- Race, Gender, and Class
- Racial and Ethnic Minorities
- Sex and Gender
- Sexuality

Anticipated Tasks for RA
Primary tasks are transcribing interviews, coding interviews, recruiting research participants, and data keeping. However, I may also invite the RA to participate in field work, shadow me at campus presentations (such as Lab Expo event in winter), and help me prepare for conferences.

Specific Time Commitments & Comments
I would like to meet at least once a week for around 30 minutes to 1 hour. Other than that I have no schedule requirements.

Tracing Reiterated Articulations of Gendered Pay Inequity in the U.S.
Heather Harper

Theorists and researchers interested in issues relating to state action, democratic governance, and the policy-making process have indicated important structural, institutional, agentic, and cultural factors that help explain how and why we see particular political and legislative outcomes in the United States. Yet most research focuses on binary outcome-oriented explanations (e.g. why a certain piece of legislation was passed or not passed).

ASA Section(s)
- Comparative and Historical Sociology
- Culture
- Political Sociology

Using the case of gendered pay inequity in the United States, my research intends to make use of (while simultaneously testing) existing approaches with the aim of analyzing a neglected yet essential aspect of our political life: the development of political content in its discursive (as part of a wider field of debate), legislative, and administrative form. Combining historical and computational methods, I seek to understand how policy options themselves come to develop, how and why certain options come to be seen as legitimate and plausible, and what connection, if any, exists between how collective problems are defined and the solutions devised to solve them.

Anticipated Tasks for RA
There are four main tasks research apprentices will be asked to assist with:
1) collecting electronically available text documents (including congressional bills and hearings and public statements by elected officials and stakeholder groups);
2) cleaning (i.e. copy-editing) text documents in preparation for computational analysis;
3) cataloguing and coding witness/statement lists from congressional hearings; and
4) collecting contextual data (e.g. organizational affiliation, political leanings, etc.) for witnesses who testify before congressional subcommittees.

Specific Time Commitments & Comments
We will have a weekly team meeting but RAs can conduct research whenever and where ever works best for them.

Democracy and Public Goods
Prof. Isaac Martin

How should society pay for things like public education and public roads? The Democracy Project is a research project devoted to the study of how democracies pay for public goods.

Our current case study is California. Over the last four decades, California voters have decided on thousands of measures concerning the basic structure and financing of local government. Our research team has collected the full texts of these measures along with related information from the published voter information guides and sample ballots from 1986-2012, and are presently engaged with a variety of research and analytical tasks at the nexus of fiscal, urban, and political sociology. We are particularly interested in how the policy design features of local taxes (e.g., who is taxed, how often does the tax occur, what will the taxed dollars fund) affect voters' willingness to pay for public goods.

ASA Section(s)
- Community and Urban Sociology
- Economic Sociology
- Political Sociology

Anticipated Tasks for RA
RAs will join a team project, led by a faculty member, that employs 1 postdoc and 1 GSR this academic year, and that has (as of fall 2017) two other affiliated researchers. We have work enough, and supervisory capacity enough, to guide at least three RAs.
1) Data collection. We plan to update our archive with the full texts and sample ballots from local agencies from 2013 to present. An RA's job would be to collect and catalog these texts. Most of them are available online, but some might require public records requests, interaction with local officials, making interlibrary loan requests, and other creative

Specific Time Commitments & Comments
We will have regular project meetings involving the PI, the postdoc, the GSR, and two other affiliated grad student researchers, and it would be best if the RAs could attend at least some of those meetings.

strategies for tracking down public documents. This is a good opportunity to learn about California government (and how to use the public records act!).
2) Data cleaning. We have a large archive of textual materials describing proposed laws that have been scanned to .txt format, and we need detail-oriented copy editors who can spot and correct errors that were introduced by the object character recognition software. This is a job for one or more RAs who might find it interesting to read legal texts.
3) Web design and maintenance. We will have a project website for sharing publications, working papers, and data, and we will need helping making the web site user-friendly, publicly accessible, and up-to-date. This is a job for someone with web design skills and a commitment to making social science accessible to the public.

Position is available for Winter 2019 only.

Research Rankings and Organizational Reactivity
Prof. Juan Pablo Pardo Guerra

ASA Section(s)
- Economic Sociology
- Organizations, Occupations & Work
- Science, Knowledge, & Technology

Starting in 1986 and roughly every five years since, the government bodies charged with managing UK higher education have assessed the quality of research in public British universities as a mechanism for optimizing the allocation of the nation's research funding. Operationalized as vast and complex assessments that simultaneously evaluate the academic outputs and research impacts of every single department across all of Britain's public universities, these exercises effectively behave as external shocks that induce the reorganization of the higher education sector and its knowledge workers.

My objective in this project is to provide a better understanding of how these shocks interact with the diverse institutional contexts and constraints that characterize British higher education and, in doing so, shape knowledge production and the evolution of academic fields.

This project approaches research assessment exercises as collective shocks that transform the way researchers and their institutions behave. An important component of this shift if how organizations change in response to external demands for research excellence. In addition to shifting the allocations of research funds, research evaluation exercises were mirrored by a number of organizational changes within universities and individual departments. For example, some universities created new roles (such as 'impact and research managers') meant to facilitate the process of collecting publications for their submission to the assessment panels. Departments also opened new internal committees devoted to planning for assessment exercises that had indirect implications on discussions of hiring, promotions, and rewards.

To track these changes in detail, I will assemble a database documenting a) organizational changes in UK universities from 1980-2018; b) changes in the internal funding and resource allocation models for UK universities from 1980-2018; c) estimates of salaries across faculty and managerial ranks. This data will be gathered through numerous Freedom of Information requests submitted to UK universities. The purpose of this data is to observe changes in the incentive

structures and funding allocation models within and across institutions that may reflect the overarching logics of research assessments.

Anticipated Tasks for RA
The RAs will be in charge of collecting data from UK universities by submitting and processing a variety Freedom of Information requests. This will require negotiating access, organizing information, and analyzing some patterns in the data.

Specific Time Commitments & Comments
None

Health Services and Beyond: Understanding Immigrant Health Care Strategies
Danielle Raudenbush

ASA Section(s)
- International Migration
- Latin@ Sociology
- Medical Sociology
- Racial and Ethnic Minorities

The central aim of this study is to understand how Mexican immigrants and their family members living in San Diego and Los Angeles achieve their health care needs. In particular, members of the research team will examine the health care experiences and strategies of these individuals.

Past research suggests that immigrants often piece together "packages" of health care, in which they use both cultural health care practices (e.g. traditional, folk methods that originate in their countries of origin) as well as conventional health services (e.g. hospitals and clinics that provide biomedical-oriented health care).

In this project, members of the research team will investigate the extent to which this is also true among Mexican immigrants and their families living in San Diego and Los Angeles, and whether there are additional health care strategies that they also use. Given San Diego and Los Angeles' close proximity to Mexico, members of the research team will also examine whether and why individuals belonging to this group ever access health services in Mexico.

Through this research we aim to identify a comprehensive set of health care practices that Mexican immigrants and their families use to meet their health care needs and to develop an understanding of why they use these practices.

Anticipated Tasks for RA
1) Conduct open-ended qualitative interviews in Spanish and English.
2) Code completed interviews using Nvivo.

Specific Time Commitments & Comments
Fluent in speaking and reading Spanish. Native proficiency preferred.

Redefining the Biomedical Subject: Biospecimen Collection and the New Common Rule
Stephen Reynders

ASA Section(s)
- Medical Sociology
- Science, Knowledge, & Technology

This project studies the evolution of rights for people who participate in scientific research. Major revisions to the Federal Policy for the Protection of

Human Subjects, the major rule of ethics regulating biomedical research in the United States, were finalized in 2018. Using text and discourse analysis, this project examines contentions evident in a nearly decade-long period of public debate regarding the proposed re-definition of "human subject" to include de-identified biospecimens. As an ethical and regulatory classification, "human subjects" is a key category determining the stringency of oversight applied to biomedical research. This debate will be contextualized in light of emergent trends in genomic research as well as medicine generally.

Anticipated Tasks for RA	Specific Time Commitments & Comments
Archival research, data collection, analyzing data: coding.	None

Predicting Individual Behavior
Prof. Akos Rona-Tas

With recent rapid developments in predictive technology, we see it deployed in an ever increasing number of social contexts. From Amazon suggesting what you will want to buy to predictive policing, algorithms try to predict what particular individuals may do in the future. What are the consequences of our improving ability to forecast what people will do?

ASA Section(s)
- Communication, Information Technologies & Media Sociology
- Consumers and Consumption
- Crime, Law, & Deviance
- Economic Sociology
- Inequality, Poverty & Mobility
- Political Sociology
- Race, Gender, and Class
- Science, Knowledge, & Technology

Anticipated Tasks for RA	Specific Time Commitments & Comments
Literature search. Internet search. Data collection. Finding evidence on the performance of predictive technology.	None

Gender and Refugee Flow
Sevin Sagnic

In this project, we analyze the changes in the gender composition of the refugee flows. The refugee flows are very selective in general, and exclusionary for women for many reasons. When women take journeys to reach safety? When they prefer to stay? Do female and male refugee flows show similar patterns? This study will unpack these questions and probe several refugees flows to find the answers.

ASA Section(s)
- Human Rights
- International Migration
- Race, Gender, and Class
- Sex and Gender

Anticipated Tasks for RA	Specific Time Commitments & Comments
Conduct online or library searches for relevant literature, managing online sources, assist data collection, memoing, cleaning the data sets, cross-checking the reference entries. Basic knowledge of Spanish and/or Greek is an asset but not mandatory.	The RA would be free to decide his/her own work hours. We will have regular meetings. We would decide together dates for specific goals and our meetings.