

Economy, Inequality, Labor, and Organizations
Department of Sociology
University of California, Irvine

Overview

The study of organizations, labor, and economy has long occupied a central place in sociological analysis. At UCI, sociologists studying organizations, labor and economy focus on the dynamics of change, inequality, social structure, and decision-making. Faculty members in this cluster pursue these themes from a variety of theoretical perspectives using multiple methods. Because of this diversity, research activities by members working in this field overlap with a number of other fields within the Department, especially social networks, political sociology/social movements, gender and family, race and ethnicity, and global change and inequality. Sociology faculty members also actively participate in the Center for Organizational Research (COR). COR brings together UCI faculty and students studying organizations from throughout the UCI campus in joint research projects, intellectual workshops, and graduate seminars.

Faculty

Nina Bandelj – economic sociology; culture; globalization; organizations; social networks; social change in Central and Eastern Europe; research design

Frank Bean - international migration, demography, racial and ethnic relations, economic sociology, family

Christine Beckman# – organization theory; gender and inequality; organizational learning and interorganizational relationships; new organizational forms

Susan Brown – immigration; inequality; urban sociology; demographic methods

Carter Butts – social networks; decision-making; economic sociology; mathematical modeling

Katherine Faust – social networks; social methods

Martha Feldman## – organization theory; organizational change; decision making; qualitative field methods

Glenda Flores###- Latino sociology, Latina professionals, work and occupations, education, middle-class minorities, qualitative methods

Matt Huffman – race/gender inequality in organizations and occupations; quantitative methods

Andrew Penner – gender; inequality; education; family; race; experimental methods

Evan Schofer – comparative political sociology; sociology of education; globalization; sociology of the environment; organizations; sociology of science; economic sociology; quantitative methods and statistics

David Smith – world systems analysis; urbanization; development; dependent development in East Asia; comparative historical sociology

Dave Snow – collective behavior and social movements; social psychology; urban sociology; social problems; culture; qualitative methods

Judith Stepan-Norris* – labor unions; sociology of work; sociology of the professions; comparative historical methods

* Cluster coordinator.

Primary affiliation with the Merage School of Business.

Primary affiliation with the Department of Planning, Policy, and Design, School of Social Ecology.

Primary affiliation with the Chicano Latino Studies

Graduate Courses and Field Exam

To qualify for a graduate field exam and/or expertise in Economy, Inequality, Labor, and Organizations, students must take at least two core courses and one elective course in the field.

Core Courses: Networks and Organizations; Organization Theory; Work and Industrial Relations; Economic Sociology; Inequality

Elective Courses: Gender and Work; Organizational Inequality; Political Analysis of Organizations; Educational Inequality; Power and Empowerment in Organizations; Culture and Consumption; Institutional Theory; World Society and Culture; Global Urbanization; special topic courses.

Course Offerings

2004-05

Fall: Culture and Consumption (special topic course; David Frank)

Winter: Power and Empowerment in Organizations (Martha Feldman)

Spring: Work and Industrial Relations (Judith Stepan-Norris)

Networks and Organizations (Carter Butts)

2005-06

Fall: (No OOL courses offered.)

Winter: Organizational Inequality (Matt Huffman), Power and Empowerment in Organizations (Martha Feldman)

Spring: Organization Theory (Calvin Morrill)

2006-07

Fall: Sociology of Strikes (Judith Stepan-Norris), Economic Sociology (Nina Bandelj)
Winter: Movements, Organizations, and Society (Mayer Zald)
Spring: Networks and Organizations (Carter Butts)

2007-08

Fall: Informant Accuracy (Carter Butts)
Winter: Power and Empowerment in Organizations (Martha Feldman)
Spring: Deliberative Democracy (Feldman, Polletta, Rosenberg)

2008-09

Fall: Work and Industrial Relations (Judy Stepan-Norris), Networks and Organizations (Carter Butts)
Winter: Institutional Theory (Evan Schofer), Gender and Work (Joy Pixley)
Spring: Culture and Consumption (David Frank)

2009-10

Fall: Economic Sociology (Nina Bandelj)
Winter: Organizational Inequality (Matt Huffman)
Spring: Organization Theory (Christine Beckman)

2010-11

Fall: Networks and Organizations (Carter Butts)
Winter: Institutional Theory (Evan Schofer)
Spring: Inequality (Matt Huffman), World Culture and Society (David Frank)

2011-12

Fall: Economic Sociology (Nina Bandelj)
Winter: Work and Industrial Relations (Judy Stepan-Norris), Power and Empowerment in Organizations (Martha Feldman)
Spring: Organizational Theory (Christine Beckman), Globalization and the World System (Smith)

2012-13

Fall: Networks and Organizations (Butts)
Winter: Institutional Theory (Schofer)
Spring: Global Urbanization (Smith)

Selected Research Projects Currently Underway by Cluster Faculty

On organizations...

- Dynamics of communication and coordination within and between organizations in response to emergency events.
- Adoption and use of online communication media by emergency management and other organizations, and the relationship of this use to the hazard context.

- Developing new techniques for modeling interaction dynamics within and between organizations, with examples ranging from classroom interactions between students to violence between street gangs.
- Global origins and substantive consequences of NGOs for state policy, social movements, and economic inequality.
- Institutions and political life: how the organizational features of modern states shape participation in voluntary association and other forms of political participation.
- Organizational complexity and the survival of charter schools. Charter schools are a new organizational form where multiple, contesting logics compete for legitimacy. The enactment and combination of those logics within organizations impacts the survival of individual organizations.
- How the social comparisons across organizations, and across organizational units, shape the propensity to engage in risky organizational change, including cases of American baseball teams, German soccer teams, and mutual fund managers.
- How the boards of directors of new ventures create opportunities -- and constraints -- for interorganizational relationships. The board serves as an important network to obtain information but also a potential dependency that restricts relationships.

On work, occupations, and socio-economic inequality...

- Examination of processes around occupational sorting and inequality, in particular how macro-level changes in the policy context affects inequality within and between jobs
- Socioeconomic and spatial mobility of the Mexican-origin population and consequences for children of unauthorized immigrants
- Gender and race inequality in management
- Trends in gender segregation in U.S. workplaces
- Latina professionals in multiracial schools
- Women in the workplace
- Middle-class minorities

On labor...

- The U.S. Labor Movement, 1900-2005: collecting and analyzing information about union democracy, union conflict (with firms and with other unions), union governance, etc.

- The Spread of the 1894 Bituminous Coal Strike: what explains that it spread to the vast majority of mines in Illinois when the union represented only a small fraction of Illinois coal miners?

- Union Summer: The investigation of the AFL-CIO Union Summer campaign, its successes and its ability to inspire interns to continue working with the labor movement.

On economy...

- Institutional and cultural foundations of globalization and their consequences for cross-national economic outcomes

- Cultural and relational influences on economic action in the case of family business

- Determinants and consequences of income inequality and gender labor market inequality in transition countries

- Educational expansion and economic inequality: what are the economic consequences of expanding educational systems around the world, in particular for income inequality.