Data Driven Discovery for the Social Sciences
Our Mission

Founded in 2004 with the broad goal of advancing social science research, the Stanford Institute for Research in the Social Sciences (IRiSS) assures the vitality and competitive advantage of social science research at Stanford, so that faculty and students are equipped to create knowledge that can be used to address critical societal challenges.

AT THE CORE OF ITS ACTIVITY, IRiSS:

- Increases the opportunity for exceptional scholarly work on policy-relevant questions
- Builds and expands the hub of data resources for the social science disciplines at Stanford
- Promotes awareness of the impact of social science research
Dear Friends,

It has been an exciting year full of growth and program development at the Stanford Institute for Research in the Social Sciences (IRiSS). All of the IRiSS centers have engaged in substantive research projects that have yielded a trove of insights with implications for societal well-being and public policy improvement.

Some notable projects include: the Center for Advanced Research Through Online Learning (CAROL) launched a research project on venture capital in education to inform purposeful development of the education sector’s venture infrastructure; the Center for Poverty and Inequality (CPI) launched the American Voices Project, a qualitative census of poverty of 5,000 households in 200 rural, suburban, and urban sites in the U.S.; the Immigration Policy Lab (IPL) assessed obstacles to citizenship, finding that a streamlined fee waiver program increased citizenship attainment by as much as 75,000 individuals; and the American National Election Studies (ANES) completed the data release of its flagship project, the 2016 Time Series study.

The past year has also featured promising additions to the IRiSS team. We are pleased to welcome two new center directors to the IRiSS faculty council: Mike Tomz, who will be expanding the programming of the Stanford Center for American Democracy (SCAD) and Dan McFarland, founder of the Center for Computational Social Science (CSS), will take the helm of the Center once again. Two staff additions directly support key parts of the IRiSS mission: Josh Quan will fortify and expand the hub of social science data resources as Academic Technology Specialist, while Isabel Lopez will promote awareness of the impact of social science research as Communications Manager.

In conjunction with the release of the University’s long-range plan earlier this year, IRiSS has initiated work on its own strategic plan. IRiSS’s mandate consists of facilitating interdisciplinary fundamental research that can be used to address critical societal challenges, and as such, squarely complements Stanford’s long-range theme Advancing and Bridging Disciplines. Furthermore, as a central component of this theme is Shaping the Digital Future, which will consist of the University’s new data science and artificial intelligence initiatives, the expansion of IRiSS’s data resources will play an important role in supporting the University’s long-range vision. Paramount to this role is IRiSS’s facilities expansion for the Federal Statistical Research Data Center (RDC) to a larger and more central location on campus, which began this summer and is on schedule to be completed sometime this fall. Such expansions of data resources and research infrastructure projected for the upcoming years will assure the continued vitality of the social sciences at Stanford and increase opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and discovery.

None of this work would have been possible without the generosity of the many individuals and foundations who support our research centers and the Institute. Among these, we want to give special recognition to the members of the IRiSS Advisory Board, who have provided constant encouragement and financial assistance for our work for more than a decade.

Karen Cook  
Director

Chris Thomsen  
Executive Director

Sandy Smith  
Advisory Board Chair
7 RESEARCH CENTERS AND PROGRAMS

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS

2,855 PARTICIPANTS

2,009 COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

846 STANFORD ALUMNI

6,052 + 2,235 = 8,287 HOURS VOLUNTEERED FOR STANFORD EXPERIMENTS

43 GRANTS MANAGED

59 SECURE DATA CENTER RESEARCHERS

47 STANFORD RESEARCHERS
12 EXTERNAL RESEARCHERS
10 DEPARTMENTS REPRESENTED
29 PROJECTS
COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN RA PROGRAM

6,600 VOLUNTEER HOURS FOR STANFORD RESEARCHERS

104 ENGAGED FACULTY
- 67 STANFORD FACULTY
- 37 FACULTY FROM COLLABORATING UNIVERSITIES
- 9 DEPARTMENTS REPRESENTED
- 24 UNIVERSITIES REPRESENTED

74 IRiSS SPONSORED FELLOWS

INCLUDING 45 IRiSS FACULTY AND GRADUATE STUDENTS
Research Centers and Programs

01. CENTER FOR ADVANCED RESEARCH THROUGH ONLINE LEARNING
02. AMERICAN NATIONAL ELECTIONS STUDY
03. LABORATORY FOR THE STUDY OF AMERICAN VALUES
04. CENTER FOR COMPUTATIONAL SOCIAL SCIENCE
05. IMMIGRATION POLICY LAB
06. CENTER ON PHILANTHROPY AND CIVIL SOCIETY
07. CENTER ON POVERTY AND INEQUALITY
01. CENTER FOR ADVANCED RESEARCH THROUGH ONLINE LEARNING

Faculty Director: Mitchell Stevens, Graduate School of Education

MISSION

The Center for Advanced Research through Online Learning (CAROL) facilitates scientific research in digitally mediated learning environments. CAROL avails researchers worldwide of data describing learner interactions on three online platforms: Lagunita, Coursera, and NovoEd. To date, CAROL has facilitated 202 shares of data to researchers within Stanford and worldwide. Shares have been extended to researchers at U.S. universities such as UC Berkeley, Carnegie Mellon, Harvard, Purdue, and UC San Diego; and internationally with researchers at Oxford, Peking University, Simon Fraser University, and the University of Sydney, among many others.

FEATURED EVENT

FUTURE OF LEARNING, OPPORTUNITY, AND WORK

In partnership with several campus units, CAROL convened a series of public forums on the future of learning, opportunity, and work in 2018-2019. Guests included Paul LeBlanc, President of Southern New Hampshire University; the futurist Vivienne Ming; California community colleges chancellor Eloy Oakley; and Arizona State University President Michael Crow. Hundreds of Bay Area residents participated in the town-hall style forums, which can inform multiple Stanford educational initiatives going forward.
FEATURED PROJECTS

VENTURE CAPITAL IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR: In a new research project, CAROL Director Mitchell Stevens and Postdoctoral Researcher Ben Gebre-Medhin are organizing their inquiry around the evolution of annual convenings for education VC hosted by the New Schools Venture Fund (founded 1998) and ASU/GSV (founded 2009). To their knowledge no comprehensive history of private capital in education has ever been conducted. The project can inform thoughtful and purposeful development of infrastructure to support responsible education ventures going forward.

CARTA COURSE EXPLORATION TOOL: The Carta project team is continuing its work on developing a shareable version of the Carta software. Carta is a web-based platform that supports informed academic exploration and choice among university students. A demonstration of the beta version is at cartalab.stanford.edu. Carta currently enjoys voluntary regular use by nearly 100% of Stanford undergraduates. The expressed purposes of Carta are (a) equitable access to academic information regardless of students’ educational experiences and (b) encouragement of efficient college completion. When finished in the coming academic year, the new version of Carta will be available for sharing and deployment at partner institutions.

PUBLICATIONS


02. AMERICAN NATIONAL ELECTIONS STUDY

Stanford PI of the ANES: Shanto Iyengar, Departments of Political Science & Communication
Head of Stanford Operations: Matt DeBell
iriss.stanford.edu/centers-programs/center-american-democracy

MISSION

The mission of the American National Election Studies (ANES) is to inform explanations of election outcomes by providing data that support rich hypothesis testing, maximize methodological excellence, measure many variables, and promote comparisons across people, contexts, and time. The ANES serves this mission by providing researchers with a view of the political world through the eyes of ordinary citizens.
$3,825,000

PUBLICATIONS


OVER THREE YEARS FROM THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Stanford will conduct the internet component of the ANES in 2020 in collaboration with the University of Michigan, which won a companion award to conduct the face-to-face component of the study.

RESEARCH UPDATE
ANES completed the data release of its flagship project, the ANES 2016 Time Series study, in 2017 and 2018.

This study interviewed 1,180 respondents face-to-face, primarily in their own homes, and 3,090 respondents online. The study asked questions about voting behavior, campaign participation, policy issues, partisanship, values, racism, social media usage, and other topics to understand Americans’ voting decisions. Researchers have made the data available for free at electionstudies.org, and the results have already been used in numerous scholarly and news media outlets. The complete ANES bibliography has over 7,000 entries; in 2018-2019, 120 articles and books were added.

Since this time last year, ANES has assembled a board of advisors consisting of political science faculty from around the country to advise on the design of the continuation of the study for the 2020 election. ANES conducted a 2018 Pilot Study of opinion and voting behavior in the 2018 midterm elections, designed to test new questions for possible inclusion in the 2020 study. ANES is also working with the General Social Survey (GSS) to carry out the first direct linkage of the two projects. The GSS is the premier opinion survey in the field of sociology, and ANES will re-interview respondents to the 2020 GSS as part of the 2020 election study.

4,270 PARTICIPANTS INTERVIEWED

7,000 BIBLIOGRAPHY ENTRIES
120 ARTICLES AND BOOKS ADDED IN 2018-2019
03. LABORATORY FOR THE STUDY OF AMERICAN VALUES

Faculty Directors: Michael Tomz and Paul Sniderman, Department of Political Science
iriss.stanford.edu/students/training-methods/survey-lab

MISSION

The Laboratory for the Study of American Values supports graduate students who are writing dissertations about American public opinion by helping them conduct original surveys of nationally representative samples of adults. The Lab’s goal is to enhance the research productivity and career success of graduate students and yield rich new insights about American values.

2018-2019 GRADUATE FELLOWS

Alejandra Aldridge (Political Science), Presidential Influence on Democratic Norms
Yifat Aran (Law School), Equity Compensation at Privately Held Firms: Assessing Employees’ Fallacies and Preferences
James Chu (Sociology), Popularity, Preferences, and the Problem of Competing Rankings
Christianne Corbett (Sociology), Pluralistic Ignorance and Men’s Aspirations for Communal Traits
Jennifer Cryer (Political Science), Confronting the “Electability Trap:” Effects of Campaign Messages, Information, and Perceived Competence on Voter Evaluations of Underrepresented Candidates
Chloe Hart (Sociology), Perceptions of sexual harassment in a post #MeToo world
Cayce Hook (Psychology), Status Quo Bias and Perceptions of Freedom
Lisa Hummel (Sociology), Shifting Support: Changes in Support for Women in Politics Based on Political Ideology
Soyoung Lee (Political Science), All’s Well That Ends Well? Policy Choice and Incumbent Approval
Rachel Lienesch (Political Science), Backlash or Encouragement? The Effect of Messaging that is Critical of Whites on Democratic Voters
Julia Melin (Sociology), Mid-career Internships and Labor Market Re-entry Outcomes for Opt Out Workers
Benjamin Schaftel (Political Science), The US military, partisan backing or partisan backlashing?
Neil Snyder (Political Science), Military Influence on Public Opinion: Sage Counsel or Political Problem?
Tagart Sobotka (Sociology), The Enabling Mother? Examining gender bias in attributions of blame, stigma, and perceived harm towards parents of opioid users
Emma Tsurkov (Sociology), The Cost and Impact of Sexual Harassment in the Workforce

16 SURVEY LAB STUDENTS
Sociology PhD candidate Lisa Hummel conducted the project *Shifting Support: Changes in Support for Women in Politics Based on Political Ideology*. Even in 2019, women are still not serving as political leaders at the same rates as men in the United States. Despite increases in the number of women in office, women’s participation in political office still pales in comparison to that of men. And the gains in women’s participation are not equally distributed across the political aisle; this disparity is especially stark when comparing the low levels of Republican women in office compared to Democrats. Given these issues, it is important to consider the way an individual’s political ideology, or how liberal or conservative they are, impacts their support for women in political office. Based on results from a nationally representative sample of 1,835 U.S. adults, Hummel found that political liberals are more likely to express support for women in political leadership than are conservatives. The results of a follow-up conjoint experiment of 1,000 U.S. adults show that when it comes to gender, liberals show a preference for women candidates compared to conservatives, whereas conservatives are less moved by candidate gender. These findings have important implications for the intersection of gender and politics within the United States.
04. CENTER FOR COMPUTATIONAL SOCIAL SCIENCE

Faculty Director: Dan McFarland, Graduate School of Education & Department of Sociology

css-center.stanford.edu

MISSION

The Center for Computational Social Science (CSS) supports social science research by using computational techniques to analyze big data. Today, huge amounts of data are available for research on human behavior: website clicks, medical records, and social media data. This data can be used to address larger societal issues of inequality, healthcare, education, democracy, and more. The Center supports these endeavors by hosting conferences, training students, offering a certificate program, and funding interdisciplinary student projects.
FEATURED EVENT
ICWSM 2018
CSS hosted the 2018 International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media (ICWSM), a forum for researchers from multiple disciplines to share knowledge and learn about cutting-edge research in social media analytics. Presentations covered new perspectives in social science theory and advanced computational algorithms, with the aim of harnessing such approaches to answer important questions about human social behavior and improve computational tools for vast and unstructured data. The conference featured industry panels with representatives from Airbnb, Twitter, Microsoft, and Reddit, amongst other prominent companies.

Using data science to understand changes in human interactions

2017-2018 GRADUATE FELLOWS

Kirk Bansak *(Political Science)*, Improving Refugee Integration Through Data-Driven Algorithmic Assignment

Engin Bumbacher *(Education)*, Scientific Models as Guides for Disciplined Perception

MJ Cho *(Communication)*, Lexicon-Based Factuality Classification of Media Consumption Data

Caue Dobbin and Tom Zohar *(Economics)*, Determinants of Inequality and Economic Opportunity Using Administrative Databases from Israel

Fernanda Herrera *(Communication)*, Using Virtual Reality to Understand Racism and Reduce Racial Bias

Alice Kathmandu *(Education)*, Understanding the Global Gender Gap in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Engagement with Agent-Based Simulation and Online Social-Psychological Interventions

Josh Kim, Sebastián Otero, and Hernán Barahona *(Economics)*, Food Labelling and (Mis)Information: Evidence from the Chilean Industry

Will Qiu *(Sociology)*, Estimating the Determinants of Trust Using Online Field Experiments

Daniel Thompson and Chloe Lim *(Political Science)*, Covering Congress: The Impact of a Congressperson’s Roles on Her Coverage

Scott Williamson *(Political Science)*, The King Can Do No Wrong: Delegation and Blame Avoidance in Authoritarian Regimes
05. IMMIGRATION POLICY LAB

Faculty Directors: Jens Hainmueller, David Laitin, and Jeremy Weinstein, Department of Political Science
Executive Director: Duncan Lawrence
immigrationlab.org

MISSION

Researchers at the Immigration Policy Lab (IPL) evaluate and design policies surrounding the integration of refugees and immigrants worldwide. Using large datasets, creative research designs, and cutting-edge analytical tools, IPL brings new evidence to bear on the urgent problems practitioners face. By guiding the people who set public policy, as well as those who directly serve immigrant communities, our research can inspire solutions and ultimately improve countless lives.

FEATURED EVENT

SXSW FESTIVAL

Leading philanthropies like the Rockefeller Foundation are increasingly investing in projects that apply data science and technology to pressing social problems. IPL is among the first organizations to take part in Rockefeller’s Data Science for Social Impact Collaborative, which is supporting pilot tests of an algorithmic tool that matches refugees to resettlement locations where they’re most likely to thrive. Executive director Duncan Lawrence traveled to the South by Southwest (SXSW) festival in Austin, Texas to present IPL’s work at Rockefeller’s Global Innovation Zone. Other “Data4Good” grantees presented projects predicting economic trends in sub-Saharan Africa and solving water shortages in California. About 75,000 people attend the SXSW conference each year, which spans technology, film, music, and interactive media.
EXPOSURE TO CELEBRITIES REDUCES PREJUDICE: Soccer is a kind of “universal language,” shared by a tremendously diverse array of people around the world. How does soccer shape attitudes toward immigrants and ethnic and religious minorities? IPL researchers were interested in the rise of Mohamed Salah, a Muslim soccer celebrity who plays for Liverpool and openly expresses his faith. As an observant Muslim in the public eye, widely admired for his skill in one of the world’s most popular sports, Salah is in a position to change the way Islam is viewed in the UK and beyond.

The team of postdoc and grad student researchers saw plenty of anecdotal evidence that his celebrity was having an effect, but they wanted to measure his influence in a more rigorous way. They looked at county-level data on hate crimes, 15 million tweets by UK soccer fans, and results from a survey of 8,060 Liverpool fans.

After Salah joined Liverpool, they found, hate crimes in Merseyside county fell by 16%, relative to trends in other counties in the UK. Anti-Muslim tweets fell by almost 50% among Liverpool fans relative to fans of other EPL teams. When they conducted a survey that included a reminder of Salah’s religiosity, they found that the prompt made Liverpool fans more likely to say that Islam is compatible with British values. As the findings illustrate, celebrity role models can familiarize fans with the identities and practices of stigmatized groups, in ways that humanize them and drive down prejudice.

EQUAL ACCESS TO CITIZENSHIP: For low-income immigrants, the path to U.S. citizenship can be full of obstacles, starting with the high cost of applying. A federal fee waiver program allows them to apply for free, yet their application rates remain low. IPL researchers found that the fee waiver can be a decisive factor in whether or not these immigrants become citizens, and their studies revealed two reasons why the program is underused.

The first reason is lack of information. When the researchers took an opportune moment to simply inform people that they’re likely eligible for the fee waiver, they were 35% more likely to apply for citizenship. Notably, the nudge was most effective for those who were less educated, had lower incomes, and registered in a language other than English—precisely those who tend to naturalize at disproportionately low rates. The findings suggest that the people who need the fee waiver the most were the least likely to know about it.

The second reason is excessive bureaucracy. As with lack of information, burdensome, confusing processes tend to deter people who most need assistance—those with the lowest incomes, education levels, and language skills. When USCIS streamlined the process to request a fee waiver, the IPL team found, naturalization rates rose among people who usually face the greatest barriers to citizenship. They calculated that about 75,000 additional immigrants per year became citizens as a direct result of this user-friendly reform.

The research points to a clear strategy for governments and civic organizations looking to encourage citizenship: spreading the word about the fee waiver, and helping make it as convenient as possible to request one, would be a good place to start.
When it comes to immigration policy, people tend to rely on anecdotes and ideology rather than evidence. Our goal is to help them make informed decisions to improve immigrants’ lives and communities.

DUNCAN LAWRENCE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, IPL
05. IMMIGRATION POLICY LAB

(Continued)

PUBLICATIONS


06. CENTER ON PHILANTHROPY AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Faculty Directors: Paul Brest, Stanford Law School, Walter W. Powell, Graduate School of Education, and Rob Reich, Department of Political Science
Executive Director: Kim Meredith
pacscenter.stanford.edu

MISSION

The Stanford Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society (Stanford PACS) develops and shares knowledge to improve philanthropy, strengthen civil society, and effect social change. Stanford PACS connects students, scholars, and practitioners and publishes the preeminent journal, Stanford Social Innovation Review (SSIR).

FEATURED EVENT
STANFORD CENTER AT PEKING UNIVERSITY

Stanford PACS hosted its 8th annual conference at the Stanford Center at Peking University on March 26-27, 2019. Stanford PACS’ China program was launched in 2012 to help advance the Center’s mission by developing and sharing knowledge to support the development of the social impact sector in China. It connects students, scholars and practitioners interested in topics related to philanthropy and social impact and helps increase the talent pipeline for the social sector in China. This year’s conference included 50 speakers presenting on a wide variety of topics for the main stage sessions, and 12 workshops. The key topics explored were “business and technology for good” and "ethics & technology" under the broader theme of “Blurring of the Boundaries.” The 289 strong audience comprised of representatives from foundations, family offices, social enterprises, impact investors, CSR teams, internet companies and media, researchers, and government think tanks. The level of engagement and quality of questions from the audience indicated a developing social sector with strong interest in scholarly research and global best practices. The conference was covered by 52 local media outlets and a total of 71 reports were published about the event.
EFFECTIVE PHILANTHROPY LEARNING INITIATIVE: The Effective Philanthropy Learning Initiative (EPLI) is led by Stanford PACS Faculty Co-Director Paul Brest and Lab Director Erinn Andrews. EPLI is an interdisciplinary team based at Stanford PACS, working at the intersection of human centered design, strategic philanthropy, and the behavioral sciences. EPLI designs and test methods, messages, products and services to increase donor impact. EPLI is currently working a Strategic Philanthropy Guide for high net worth donors and a Wealth Advisor Toolkit which will serve as an interactive resource for wealth advisors to help their clients develop and implement their philanthropic plans.

POLARIZATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE LAB: The Polarization and Social Change Lab (PSCL) is led by incoming Faculty Co-Director Robb Willer, Professor of Sociology, Psychology (by courtesy), and organizational behavior (by courtesy). Rising political polarization and declining civility in political engagement are critical social problems of our time in part because they stand as barriers to addressing all other social problems. Without addressing entrenched political divisions, effective action on pressing challenges like global warming, poverty, immigration, and health care is impossible. PSCL addresses these problems through research on actionable solutions sufficient to check rising polarization and incivility in the U.S. and abroad. The multidisciplinary team theorizes interventions, rigorously evaluates them with experimental and observational data, and investigates their effective dissemination to political leaders and the general public.
In FY19, the Civic Life of Cities Lab (CLCL) at Stanford PACS added Taipei (Taiwan) to the cross-city comparison study which includes Seattle, Shenzhen, Sydney, Vienna, and the SF Bay Area. CLCL is led by faculty co-director Woody Powell and explores how nonprofits contribute to their local communities. It provides evidence-based insights that advance the understanding of nonprofits’ contributions to civic capacity and the local experiences of global trends that influence the nonprofit sector. The Lab includes a wide range of scholars from the fields of public policy, sociology, management, and urban studies. This intellectual diversity enables the team to examine the nonprofit sector at the field-level, organization-level, and management-level. CLCL explores the different socio-economic environments that nonprofits operate in and the consequences of associational life for building robust communities.

CLCL will serve as a longstanding resource for scholars and academics to understand changes and transformations in the nonprofit sector. The research methodology and corresponding data will be accessible online with the intention that other scholars undertake similar studies of the nonprofit sector in cities across the globe. The Lab will also actively disseminate findings to practitioners, funders, and sector intermediaries such as consultants and information service providers.
Stanford PACS published the 10th annual Philanthropy and Digital Civil Society: Blueprint authored by Lucy Bernholz, Senior Research Scholar at Stanford PACS and Director of the Digital Civil Society Lab. The Blueprint is an annual industry forecast about the ways we use private resources for public benefit in the digital age. Each year, it provides an overview of the current landscape, points to big ideas that matter, and directs attention to horizons where one can expect important breakthroughs in the coming year. The first Blueprint was published in December 2010 and is intended for anyone involved in using private resources for public benefit and to help individuals see their individual roles within the dynamics of the larger collective project of creating civil society.

The Blueprint 2019 captures the global nature of our connections, the broad range in which people are using their private resources for public benefit, and the need to focus our collective attention not on programmatic efficiencies but on the massive shifts in democratic practice in which civil society is implicated. The challenges people across the world face are global and existential – climate change, technological capabilities, and democratic practice are domains in which the assumptions and practices that shaped development leading up to 2019 are clearly not working for most of the people on the planet. At such times it seems necessary to question whether doing the same thing is the right plan of action. This Blueprint hopes to help practitioners ask such questions about their own work, organizations, and mission – and get closer to answers that they can act on.
FEATURED PROJECTS

AMERICAN VOICES PROJECT: Opportunities for upward mobility are declining. And the decline is precipitous: Ninety percent of children born in 1940 grew up to earn more than their parents, whereas today only half of all children earn more than their parents. The American Voices Project, which launched in June, will interview 5,000 people across the country to understand their successes and struggles, their hopes and dreams, and their ideas for making our country work better. Research fellows will visit 200 communities across all 50 states, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico to conduct in-depth interviews with individuals and families to learn about their lives, social networks, economic activity, health, and well-being. The objective: to build 21st-century policy that’s truly of the people, by the people, and for the people.

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA PROJECT: CPI is collaborating with Third Sector Capital Partners and state and local agencies to develop and leverage administrative data to evaluate social service programs. Partner agencies include the Washington Department of Children, Youth, and Families; the Santa Cruz Human Services Department; and the San Diego Health and Human Services Agency. In Washington, CPI is evaluating the impact of early childhood development programs that target vulnerable groups, including low-income families and children with developmental delays or disabilities. The objective is to measure how these programs impact key health and education outcomes, including kindergarten readiness. In Santa Cruz, CPI is evaluating how participation in subsidized employment programs affects employment and earnings growth. Finally, in San Diego, CPI is building an administrative data infrastructure that links data on homelessness mitigation services with health care data at the individual level to understand how such programs affect health care utilization, health outcomes, and exits from homelessness. The core component of all three projects is linking program participation data with administrative data sources to provide evidence that allows agencies to tailor their programs very precisely to improve long-term outcomes for program participants.

FEATURED EVENT

STATE OF THE UNION: MILLENNIAL DILEMMA

Can millennials make it in the new gig economy? Are they facing higher rates of poverty than previous generations? Are the key race and gender gaps finally closing for them? For its 6th annual State of the Union conference, CPI brought together the country’s leading experts to provide the latest evidence on how millennials are faring. The accompanying issue of Pathways and the conference presentations are available on the CPI website, inequality.stanford.edu.
To build 21st-century policy that’s truly of the people, by the people, and for the people.

AMERICAN VOICES PROJECT

07. CENTER ON POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

Faculty Director: David Grusky, Department of Sociology
Associate Director: Charles Varner
inequality.stanford.edu

MISSION

The Center on Poverty and Inequality (CPI) has five objectives:
1. To monitor trends in poverty and inequality
2. To support scientific analysis of poverty and inequality
3. To develop science-based policy on poverty and inequality
4. To disseminate data and research on poverty and inequality
5. To train the next generation of scholars, policy analysts, and politicians
Research Support Services

01. SECURE DATA CENTER
02. FACULTY FELLOWS PROGRAM
03. FACULTY SEED GRANTS
04. DISSERTATION FELLOWS
05. GRADUATE STUDENT PROGRAMS
06. RESEARCH EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS
01. SECURE DATA CENTER

Faculty Director: Matt Snipp, Department of Sociology
iriss.stanford.edu/centers-programs/sdc

MISSION

The Stanford IRiSS Secure Data Center has a three-part mission to:
1. Provide social science research infrastructure
2. Safeguard sensitive data at Stanford
3. Serve as a liaison between Stanford and providers of sensitive data

The Center also provides secure research facilities for a limited number of individual faculty and graduate student projects that need dedicated, secure space.

AVAILABLE DATASETS

FEDERAL STATISTICAL RESEARCH DATA CENTER: The Federal Statistical Research Data Center provides access to non-public microdata from a growing number of federal agencies, including the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the National Center for Health Statistics, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and, soon, the Bureau of Economic Analysis, in a secure facility at IRiSS.

ADD HEALTH DATA: The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (also known as Add Health) is a nationally representative study designed to examine how social contexts (such as families, friends, peers, schools, neighborhoods, and communities) influence teens’ health and risk behaviors through early adulthood.

EUROSTAT MICRODATA: Eurostat is the statistical office of the European Union. Its mission is to provide high quality statistics for Europe by providing microdata, such as records about individuals or businesses that are considered confidential and must be handled through different mechanisms than publicly available administrative data.
The Secure Data Center hosts one of the 29 Federal Statistical Research Data Centers (RDCs) located across the country at Stanford, which allows researchers at Stanford and other local universities to gain access to restricted-use microdata from the Census Bureau and other federal agencies. The Stanford RDC has been staffed by a full-time administrator since January 2018. As anticipated, with more people aware of the Stanford RDC and interested in using survey and administrative microdata, the community of RDC researchers has expanded and the demand for critical help from the RDC administrator has been essential. It is expected that this growth will continue for years.

There are currently 47 Stanford RDC researchers working on a total of 21 active RDC projects. Most of these projects use microdata from either the Census Bureau or the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). As datasets from more agencies become available in the RDCs, it is expected that there will be increasing interest in using the Stanford RDC. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) recently agreed to let researchers access its data in the RDCs; as a result, the first BLS project in the Stanford RDC started in March 2019. An agreement with the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) was also finalized recently, and the Stanford RDC’s first BEA project will start later this year.

The Secure Data Center has also made significant progress toward the facilities expansion of the RDC at Stanford. Last year, the project received approval from the provost and financial support at $1.5 million from the deans of H&S, GSB and School of Medicine. As noted above, with 47 researchers restricted to sharing only five workstations at the current RDC, the expansion is as timely as it is necessary. At this stage, Santa Clara County has approved the project plans, and a contractor began work in August 2019. Projections indicate that construction will be complete and the Census Bureau will finish a security review in time for the new facility to open this fall.
02. FACULTY FELLOWS PROGRAM
iriss.stanford.edu/faculty/faculty-fellows

MISSION

The Faculty Fellows Program brings Stanford faculty together from the social science departments to explore and collaborate on research questions through multidisciplinary approaches and cutting-edge methodologies to make advances in research that can be disseminated in publications and the classroom.

2018-2019 FELLOWS

Paulla Ebron (Anthropology), Making Tropical Africa in the Sea Islands

Angela Garcia (Anthropology), The Annex: Violence and Recovery on the Edge of Mexico City

Brad Larsen (Economics), Licensing and Negotiation in an Online World

Jennifer Pan (Communication), Information Manipulation in the Digital Age: How Chinese Officials Conceal Online Accusations of Corruption

David Pedulla (Sociology), The Organizational Bases of Hiring Discrimination

Ken Scheve (Political Science), Globalization, Public Opinion, and the UK’s Post-Brexit Economic Future

Krish Seetah (Anthropology), Improving Malaria “Early Warning” Predictive Models

Paul Sniderman (Political Science), The Challenge of Muslim Inclusion in Western Europe

Isaac Sorkin (Economics), Firms and Unemployment Insurance Take-up

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT
THE WELFARE OF WALLS: MIGRATION AND THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER

Melanie Morten, Assistant Professor of Economics and Faculty Fellow in 2017-18, examined the economic effects of the 2006 Secure Fence Act, which enabled the construction of 550 miles of border fence along the U.S.-Mexico border. Her research made use of a new Mexican government database on Mexican immigrants to the U.S., which contains both the origin (municipality in Mexico) and the destination (county in the U.S.). Using this fresh data, Morten was able to construct measures of exposure to the border wall and then to study the effect of the wall on migration flows and the economic impact on the U.S. and Mexican labor markets. Results of the study show a slight reduction of 0.4% in migration. U.S.-born, college-educated workers lost $4.32 in annual income, while less educated workers gained $0.36. Both results were below the $7 per person cost of wall construction, for a net negative economic effect. The findings were presented at several conferences, including the 2018 Urban Economics national conference and the 2018 Migration and Development Conference, as well as at Yale, Boston University, and an MIT/Harvard Development Economics Workshop. This research was instrumental in achieving an NSF CAREER award in February 2018, which provides funding for five years of further research. The paper was released by the National Bureau of Economic Research in their working paper series, and gained substantial media interest.

03. FACULTY SEED GRANTS PROGRAM

iriss.stanford.edu/faculty/seed-grants

MISSION

The Faculty Seed Grants Program supports faculty member’s early-stage research projects, providing them with resources to carry out proposal development, pilot research, and other essential tasks to create the proof-of-concept necessary to attract external funding for further research.
Exposure to physical disorder in neighborhoods is known to affect the health of residents as well as crime levels, contributing to inequality in the U.S. This project by Jackelyn Hwang, Assistant Professor of Sociology, and Nikhil Naik (Harvard), developed an AI tool to assemble a database of millions of images to measure the physical conditions of neighborhoods, across cities and over time. Testing shows that their algorithm is able to recognize trash in an image at similar rates as human subjects. Health and crime data have been gathered from three cities to date, in order to analyze how physical neighborhood conditions are related to economic and health outcomes.

These measures will provide a powerful new resource for understanding inequality in the U.S., as well as helping policymakers track neighborhood progress and target improvements. The project was presented at the EU Computational Social Science Summer School in Berlin, Germany, sponsored by GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences. Progress made through the seed grant has resulted in funding from other Stanford funders, the National Science Foundation and the UPS Endowment Fund.
04. DISSERTATION FELLOWS PROGRAM

iriss.stanford.edu/students/funding/iriss-dissertation-fellowships

MISSION

The Dissertation Fellows Program supports PhD candidates within the social science departments through resource provision and research support services. Particular consideration is given to graduate students whose research crosses disciplinary boundaries, relies upon computational social science methods, and/or analyzes large, complex data sets.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT

HOW FAILURE RHETORIC AND THE PEER NETWORK INFLUENCE ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS

Jessica Santana, PhD candidate in Sociology, studied the ways that entrepreneurs view and make use of failure. In most places, failure is stigmatized. Yet, failure is the most likely outcome in entrepreneurship. Santana interviewed founders of failed firms, finding that they use failure narratives to make sense of failure. She also conducted inductive computational text analysis and correspondence analysis on a set of blog-based startup postmortem narratives. The role of peers is important, as they are an ideally situated audience for making sense of failure while avoiding stigma. Entrepreneurs turn to peers to learn from failure, collectively redefine failure on more positive terms, access necessary social capital, and reaffirm their entrepreneurial identity. All these processes contribute to recovery from failure, and to entrepreneurial persistence.

Santana has accepted an offer as Assistant Professor in Technology Management, College of Engineering, University of California, Santa Barbara.

2018-2019 GRADUATE FELLOWS

Cordelia Erickson-Davis (Anthropology), Sensory Ethnography and the Bionic Eye: What it is to See

Jane Esberg (Political Science), Strategies of Repression in Pinochet’s Chile

Kaiji Gong (Economics), Local Technology Spillover of Multinational Firms

Audrey Guo (Economics), The Effect of Unemployment Insurance Taxation on Multi-Establishment Firms

Sam Holley-Kline (Anthropology), Entangled Archaeology, Industry, and Labor in El Tajiin, Mexico, 1880-2017

Chloe Lim (Political Science), Checking the Process, Performance, and Effects of Fact-checking

Iris Malone (Political Science), Insurgency Formation and Civil War Onset

Amanda Mireles (Sociology), The Constraints of Progress: Examining Women’s Educational Advantage and its Unintended Consequences

Taylor Orth (Sociology), The Male Care Penalty: Unpacking the Mechanisms that Reproduce the Gender Gap in Care Works

Sabrina Papazian (Anthropology), Armenia Beyond Borders: The Transnational Management of Armenian Cultural Heritage

Jacob Reidhead (Sociology), Intra-Party Patronage and Party Stability in South Korea and Taiwan

Jessica Santana (Sociology), Entrepreneurial Failure Narratives and Peer Boundary Work

Erica Yoon (Psychology), Modeling Polite Speech: Tradeoff Between Communicative Goals

13 PROGRAM FELLOWS
The fellowship helped me in two ways. First, it helped financially by allowing me to spend time focusing on my research and writing rather than getting a job. Second, it helped introduce me to a diverse group of incredible people from a variety of disciplines. It was really interesting and useful to hear about the computational research being done by others in a similar career stage, and it was also helpful to get feedback on my own work.
05. GRADUATE STUDENT PROGRAMS

MISSION
Graduate student programs provide general support for the social science research activities of graduate students within the social science departments of the School of Humanities & Sciences, the Graduate School of Education, and the Graduate School of Business.
2018-2019 ACTIVITIES

IRISS LIAISONS: Quarterly meetings and ongoing communication with a dedicated group of graduate student representatives from each of the six social science departments and the Graduate School of Education provide a two-way information stream regarding the needs of students and the opportunities provided by IRiSS.

PILOT PROGRAMS: In response to student requests, IRiSS has been piloting a select number of small awards programs that address unmet needs such as: access to paid survey experiment respondents; funds for supplementary research data; and procurement of open-access licenses for student-authored publications. These pilots are being evaluated for future directions in graduate student support.

NEW GRADUATE STUDENT COMMUNICATION: Incoming graduate students in the social science departments are provided with detailed information on IRiSS events and services during their orientation. An annual IRiSS Graduate Student Reception introduces students to IRiSS events and services, providing an opportunity for students to meet IRiSS staff, raise concerns, and ask questions.

FEATURED EVENT
CTASS: COMPUTATIONAL TEXT ANALYSIS IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

IRiSS sponsors a student-initiated monthly workshop series on Computational Text Analysis in the Social Sciences (CTASS). Since 2017, the interdisciplinary group has hosted numerous faculty lectures, student talks, and workshop sessions on text analysis methodology. Highlights from 2018-19 included a presentation from professor Suma Bhat, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign on Context-Sensitive Malicious Spelling Error Correction. Senior Research Scientist Su-Youn Yoon, from the Educational Testing Service (ETS), presented work on SpeechRater, an automated oral proficiency scoring system for non-native English speakers’ speech. The group also hosted an interactive webscraping workshop by Stanford Libraries CIDR Head of Social Science Data Scott Bailey, during which students learned how to “scrape” data from multiple web pages, select particular information, and save it in structured files. In addition to hands-on experience, the workshop included a discussion of legal and ethical issues associated with this type of data collection for social science research.
Besides looking amazing on my application, I applied many of the skills I learned from my RA internship to other research projects that I conducted on my own which also strengthened my application tremendously.

ANONYMOUS, 2018 RESEARCH ASSISTANT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM EXIT SURVEY
RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT

EMPHASIZING WORK PASSION LOWERS JOB APPLICANTS’ NEGOTIATED SALARY

230 community college student participants from the REP subject pool were recruited to experimentally examine whether emphasizing work passion is an effective self-presentation strategy for job applicants. In this experiment, students wrote cover letters for a job they were interested in pursuing after graduation. They were advised to emphasize either passion, competence, or motivation. They were “offered” a salary and were instructed to provide a counter-offer. The group who emphasized passion countered with lower salary requests compared to the other groups. Freund and Neale found through a set of studies that although “presenting passion” may increase evaluators’ preference to hire, it also decreases the salary amount passionate job candidates may settle for. Future work will focus on understanding the psychological phenomenon involved in passionate potential hires undervaluing themselves.


RESEARCH ASSISTANT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Research Assistant Internship Program matches community college students interested in social science research and careers with volunteer internships at social science research labs at Stanford University. Community college students serve as research interns with graduate and postdoctoral researchers in psychology, sociology, education, communication, and other social science related disciplines.

The program has been in operation for six years, with community college students participating either in the summer or academic year. The earliest participants have graduated from college and gone on to graduate school or careers. During the past three years of the program, 27 students successfully transitioned from their internship to a four-year university. Their transfer schools included the following: UCLA (9), UC Berkeley (4), Stanford (2), and one student each to UC San Diego, Columbia University, Palo Alto University, UC Davis, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, University of San Francisco, University of Southern California, Georgetown University, San Francisco State, University of Toronto, and UC Santa Barbara.

ALUMNI RESEARCH EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

The Alumni Research Experience Program (AREP) is a unique and fun opportunity for Stanford alumni to volunteer as human subjects for non-medical, social science research. Alumni participants contribute to scholars’ research on important questions of political science, economics, sociology, communication, and psychology.

06. RESEARCH EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS

iriss.stanford.edu/rep

COMMUNITY COLLEGE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

The Community College Research Experience Program (REP), a collaborative, year-round program with local community colleges, creates a much-needed subject pool for Stanford researchers who are conducting experimental research. By the same token, REP provides an opportunity for community college students to experience Stanford social science experiments as a part of their introductory social science coursework in college.

27 students transitioned to 4-year universities in past 3 years
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04. AFFILIATED FACULTY
05. FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS
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Fiscal Year September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2019
Functional expense breakdown based on total program expenditures of $16,535,689.

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