

## Sociology Department Research Apprenticeship Program WI22 & SP22 Projects

Students interested in the Research Apprenticeship Program are required to [apply to each project individually online](#).

The time commitment for participation in the research apprenticeship program will be roughly around 10-12 hrs a week hours per project (exact times will vary).

### Available Projects (See specific page for details of project):

1. <b>I Feel Like a Student: Academic, Professional, and Mental Health Experiences in College</b> , Doreen Hsu (Page 2)
2. <b>Uncovering the Face Mask: The Construction of Risk and Anti-Risk during the COVID-19 Pandemic</b> , Chuncheng Liu (Page 2-3)
3. <b>Steer the Sound: A mixed-method study of Chinese popular music</b> , Ke Nie (Page 3-4)
4. <b>Uncertainty Detection in Risk Assessments: A human-AI collaboration in document analysis</b> , Katie Hale (Page 4-5)
5. <b>Democracies, Polities in Transition, and Refugees: The Struggle to be Generous</b> , Min Ji Kim (Page 5)
6. <b>Constructing Populations and Population Health in Genomic Research and Precision Medicine</b> , Carolina Mayes (Page 6)
7. <b>Budgeting education</b> , Prof. Juan Pablo Pardo Guerra (Page )
8. <b>Forced Back "Home": A Comparative Historical Analysis of Deportee Incorporation</b> , Fatima Khayar (Page 7)
9. <b>Gender Bias in STEM fields</b> , Prof. Mary Blair (Page 7-8)
10. <b>Does infrastructure reflect the polity</b> , Bolun Zhang (Page 8)
11. <b>Taxing Economic Elites in Latin America: Political Ideology, Contentious Rhetoric and Anti-Tax Corporate Networks</b> , Germano Ribeiro (Page 8-9)
12. <b>The Urban Politics of Heritagization in Post-Industrial Taipei</b> , Yen-Ting Hsu (Page 9-10)
13. <b>Anti-femicide activism and visual culture on social media</b> , Ana Lopez Ricoy (Page 10)

## Project Descriptions:

### 1. I Feel Like a Student: Academic, Professional, and Mental Health Experiences in College

*Doreen Hsu*

This project builds on my previous research projects about UCSD students' academic achievement and experiences of stress in college. I focused on how Asian American students think about their race, ethnicity, family backgrounds, and education experiences. More recently, I have become more interested in the experiences of mixed-race students on campus and the perspectives of university administration staff and faculty members. I am expanding this research to incorporate virtual interviews and participant observations with campus organizations, social events, social groups, and other individuals to find out more about how the school as an institution deals with students' experiences of their academics, professional development, and mental health stresses.

#### Key Topics(s)

- Asia and Asian America
- Education
- International Migration
- Mental Health
- Race, Gender, and Class

#### Anticipated Tasks for RA

Tasks may be both virtual and in-person. In winter quarter, I may ask RAs to complete a variety of data collection and analysis tasks, such as gathering relevant online sources, observing campus social events, and participating in interviews. In spring quarter, RAs may have opportunities to advance by collaborating on writing projects. In both quarters, students will be expected to participate in research conferences and related workshop events. Overall, tasks may include: 1) attend virtual/in-person campus social events relating to student success/wellbeing, 2) participate in presentations on research or professionalization content, 3) recruit research participants, 4) participate in virtual research participant interviews, 5) analyzing interview data, 6) do record-keeping, and 7) participate in weekly virtual meetings.

#### Specific Time Commitments & Comments

Since we will be conducting interviews and participant observations, a flexible schedule for the California time zone is a plus. For RA testimonials and more information, see:

<https://doreenhsu.wordpress.com/ra-work/>

We will have meetings once or twice a week as a team, but RAs can complete their tasks whenever and wherever works best for them. Past RAs have described the time commitment as 10 hours a week on average.

### 2. Uncovering the Face Mask: The Construction of Risk and Anti-Risk during the COVID-19 Pandemic

*Chungheng Liu*

Face masks, a rather mundane artifact, have quickly come under the spotlight with the global outbreak of COVID-19. Despite some protests against mask-wearing, it has not only become an essential part of public life but also figured prominently in policies and regulations at various levels such as state government, universities, supermarkets, etc. How to

#### Key Topics(s)

- Asia and Asian America
- Communication, Information Technologies & Media Sociology
- Global and Transnational Sociology
- Science, Knowledge, & Technology

account for the role of a mundane object like face masks in regulating and governing our lives? What role do masks play in the construction of risks during the pandemic? And, what at all is a mask—a cloth covering, protection to life, or a sign of responsible citizen?

This project aims to examine the intertwined issues of governance and risk construction by uncovering the constitution of face masks during the COVID-19 pandemic. This project draws upon a comparative perspective between China and the U.S., which have presented distinct narratives and policies about mask-wearing in their anti-pandemic efforts. The plan is to conduct interview and archive analysis to understand the social construction of risk and anti-risk object in different societies. There are two PIs of this project (one at UCSD while another at Cornell University).

#### Anticipated Tasks for RA

The RA would be asked to perform data collection for this project, including: recruiting participants; conducting interviews; transcribing interviews; and conducting archival research.

#### Specific Time Commitments & Comments

Depending on the language skills and nationalities, the RA for this project may help the data collection for either the Chinese or the US case.

I expect we meet once a week through zoom. On average it would take 10 hours a week working on this project.

### 3. Steer the Sound: A mixed-method study of Chinese popular music

*Ke Nie*

In this project, I study how industrial development, economic incentives, political interventions, and creative personnel shape musical creativity in China through extensive platformization in the past two decades. Specifically, using computational methods to analyze an original dataset of over 190,000 songs collected from a music streaming platform, as well as collecting qualitative data from ethnographic observations, interviews, and policy documents, I employ a mixed-method design to study how social institutions in China shape the creative outcomes of popular music production (i.e., what songs are written) as well as the creative practices through which these outcomes have materialized (i.e., how these songs are written).

#### Key Topics(s)

- Asia and Asian America
- Communication, Information Technologies & Media Sociology
- Culture
- Economic Sociology
- Global and Transnational Sociology
- Mathematical Sociology
- Organizations, Occupations & Work
- Political Sociology

#### Anticipated Tasks for RA

RAs will be asked to assist me with one or multiple of the following four tasks based on their expertise.

#### Specific Time Commitments & Comments

10 hours per week per student for data collecting, cleaning, and analyzing. 1-1.5 hours per week for meeting

- 1) Collect data from various sources, including websites, online archives, etc.
- 2) Clean data, including quantitative data and/or qualitative data.
- 3) Assist in analyzing data with the help of PI.
- 4) Collect and discuss relevant scholarship with PI.

Mandarin reading proficiency is preferred but not required. Familiarity with programming languages such as R and Python is a plus. Musical knowledge will be a bonus.

#### 4. Uncertainty Detection in Risk Assessments: A human-AI collaboration in document analysis

*Katie Hale*

This project uses machine learning methods to study the role of uncertainty and ignorance in risk assessments written by scientific and technical experts. Its primary aim is to develop a natural language classifier that can reliably determine if a given sentence in a scientific document contains an expression of uncertainty or doubt. With this tool, it will be possible to compare how and when uncertainty is used within scientific discourse in different expert disciplines, such as food safety and environmental impact assessment, and in the differing policy contexts of the United States and the European Union.

The role of the RA will be to assist in improving the accuracy of the machine classifier. A previously-existing database of human-labeled uncertainty expressions within risk assessments published by the USDA, FDA, and EFSA (the European Food Safety Authority) serves as the classifier's initial training data. A first iteration of the classifier, trained on this dataset, will be applied to a subset of more recent, unlabeled documents, and the output classifications will be reviewed by the PI and RA for accuracy and precision. Once the validation/correction process on this subset is complete, another iteration of the classifier will be trained on the expanded dataset, and its outputs evaluated in turn. Through this iterative bootstrapping process, the goal is to develop a classifier which is reasonably accurate, and the limitations of its accuracy well-understood.

##### Anticipated Tasks for RA

Sociological coding to validate and improve machine classifications- the RA will read sections of EFSA risk assessments, flag sentences containing uncertainty, and review uncertainty expressions flagged by the machine for accuracy. The PI will perform these tasks as well, but separately from the RA.

##### Key Topics(s)

- Environment and Technology
- Methodology
- Science, Knowledge, & Technology

##### Specific Time Commitments & Comments

A prior familiarity with sociological coding & content analysis is NOT required. Fluency in reading and understanding complex scientific and technical publications is required.

Ideally, the RA will have some prior experience or background in the biological or medical sciences, or, less

ideally, experience in some other quantitative scientific discipline.

Experience in programming (Python, JavaScript) and/or machine learning methodologies (NLP, DNNs, transformer models) is welcome, but NOT required. The document coding interface will be usable by anyone with basic web literacy and a computer with a modern web browser.

9-12 hours/week, with significant flexibility- the classification validation process can be done on the RAs own computer, at their convenience.

## 5. Democracies, Polities in Transition, and Refugees: The Struggle to be Generous

*Min Ji Kim*

Immigration policy in the United States has historically varied according to domestic politics, global trends, and ideologies of racism. In the late 19th and early 20th century, the US enacted increasingly restrictive policies to exclude immigrants based on national origin. However, for immigrants traveling to the US to pursue higher education, they could typically bypass these restrictions. In fact, some larger migration streams (e.g. Filipinos in southern California) began when individuals from that country arrived in the US to pursue education. Bipartisan political approval of international students is an anomaly within immigration policy. This project seeks to understand why international students have been a favored immigrant group and how support for them has been framed. We'll do so by analyzing legislative documents and historical records.

### Key Topics(s)

- Comparative and Historical Sociology
- Education
- International Migration
- Political Sociology
- Racial and Ethnic Minorities

### Anticipated Tasks for RA

Literature search Data collection (legislative, newspaper) Coding policy documents

### Specific Time Commitments & Comments

General understanding of and/or interest in immigration policy

We will have weekly meetings, but the time commitment is flexible. I will make sure that the RA's responsibilities do not exceed the weekly allotted time.

## 6. Constructing Populations and Population Health in Genomic Research and Precision Medicine

*Carolina Mayes*

The methods organizations use to address racial and gender discrimination are changing. These shifting strategies are influenced by multiple forces, such as the opportunities and pressures presented by the Movement for Black Lives (BLM), to the Trump administration's executive directive banning certain types of diversity training in federal agencies. Research shows that organizations construct formal structures in order to signal compliance with equal employment opportunity laws, but these do not necessarily succeed in redressing issues of diversity and inclusion. This project focuses on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) organizations' strategies for combating discrimination and the roles played by professional scientists and engineers. STEM is an interesting context to examine these questions because certain scientific principles, such as universalism and value-neutrality, may obstruct recognition of the problem among professionals and/or shape organizational strategies. Both academic (universities) and industry (biotech, tech, life sciences, etc.) organizations are considered.

### Key Topics(s)

- Medical Sociology
- Racial and Ethnic Minorities
- Science, Knowledge, & Technology

### Anticipated Tasks for RA

Assistance with coding semi-structured interview transcripts and development of coding framework; note-taking on interview data to suggest themes; collaborative analysis.

### Specific Time Commitments & Comments

- Familiarity with Atlas.TI is a bonus but not necessary.
- I am currently seeking funding to employ an RA over the summer, so there may be opportunity to continue if an RA is interested.

## 7. Budgeting education

*Prof. Juan Pablo Pardo Guerra*

In this project, we will trace the different budgeting approaches of higher education institutions in the last 2 decades to make sense of how they shifted the way social sciences and humanities are staffed and taught in the US.

### Key Topics(s)

- Organizations, Occupations & Work

### Anticipated Tasks for RA

Obtain information through FOIA requests from public universities.

### Specific Time Commitments & Comments

N/A

## 8. Forced Back "Home": A Comparative Historical Analysis of Deportee Incorporation

*Fatima Khayar*

This project aims to understand how deportees (re)claim their citizenship upon returning to the motherland. Using ethnographic and interview data with deportees and key stakeholders in Mexico, along with historical documents from archives in Mexico and the United States, I study the conditions that have shaped deportees' incorporation in Mexico across three waves of mass returns from the U.S. into Mexico: The Great Depression, the period that culminated with Operation Wetback and the contemporary period. I analyze the programs put in place to allocate rights and services to returning emigrants along with deportees' concomitant political mobilization. Differences in styles and modes of political mobilization on the part of repatriated citizens in relation to a regime's conceptualization of returnees' potential contribution to the nation-state building process explain why some repatriated citizens have been better able to (re)assimilate than others.

### Key Topics(s)

- International Migration
- Latinx Sociology
- Political Sociology

### Anticipated Tasks for RA

- Review and coding of archival documents.
- Memo-ing

### Specific Time Commitments & Comments

Spanish reading comprehension required.

10-12 hours/week

## 9. Gender Bias in STEM fields

*Prof. Mary Blair*

I lead a National Science Foundation-funded project on the subtle biases that continue to discourage and devalue women in STEM fields. I am seeking 1-2 undergraduate research apprentices to work closely with me on the research tasks listed below.

The apprentice will have a first-row seat to watch and assist in the process of assessing data and writing papers on this exciting topic. To learn more about this project, please see [crg-stemm.ucsd.edu](http://crg-stemm.ucsd.edu).

### Key Topics(s)

- Organizations, Occupations & Work
- Race, Gender, and Class
- Sex and Gender

### Anticipated Tasks for RA

1. Find and review recent social science research on gender inequality in STEM
2. Discuss the material with me
3. Read and comment on drafts of papers I write

### Specific Time Commitments & Comments

Self-motivation. Good communication skills, including willingness to reach out whenever questions arise or additional guidance is needed.

4. Set up bibliographic data base with standard software to keep track of citations
5. Assist in final manuscript preparation and PowerPoint slide design.

Minimum of 10 hours a week. Given the corona virus precautions, the apprentice will work remotely with flexibly timed hours. Our weekly interactions would be over Zoom or telephone and email.

## 10. Does infrastructure reflect the polity

*Bolun Zhang*

This project examines the social experiences and political perspectives of diaspora Puerto Ricans who reside in California. Unlike established PR communities in places like New York, Chicago, and other East Coast cities, little is known about the history and contemporary lives of Puerto Rican-identified people in places like California. For this project, part of a larger project on Puerto Rican political subjectivities, I have been interviewing first, second, and third generation Puerto Ricans who reside in California. Research assistance would include transcription of interviews and literature review/annotated bibliography.

### Key Topics(s)

- Economic Sociology
- Global and Transnational Sociology
- Political Sociology
- Science, Knowledge, & Technology
- Theory

### Anticipated Tasks for RA

- This research is co-conducted with Donghyun Koo.
- We will read literature on smart cities together.
- The RA will also engage in collecting and cleaning the data. Mainly policy documents, government procurement data.
- The RA will also write empirical briefing for the group discussion.

### Specific Time Commitments & Comments

- Students must read Korean or Chinese.
- We welcome those who are interested in computational social science to participate as well. For the quantitative part we will use R.
- This research is co-conducted with Sociology Grad Student Donghyun Koo.

## 11. Taxing Economic Elites in Latin America: Political Ideology, Contentious Rhetoric and Anti-Tax Corporate Networks

*Germano Ribeiro*

This project aims to identify mechanisms employed by business elites to block tax reforms in Latin American countries. To do so, it compares the trajectories of three recent tax reform processes in two of the largest countries in the region: Brazil and Argentina. By examining two different data sources - parliamentary debates and interviews with

### Key Topics(s)

- Comparative and Historical Sociology
- Economic Sociology
- Inequality, Poverty & Mobility
- Political Sociology

businesspeople from both countries - the main goal is to understand the ways in which elites organize to avoid taxation and therefore maintain the high levels of economic inequality currently seen in Latin America. Research apprentices will help organize and analyze both historical documents and interview materials.

**Anticipated Tasks for RA**

Research Apprentices will perform two different tasks:

- 1) Read and Qualitatively Code Transcriptions of Parliamentary Debates in Brazil and Argentina
- 2) Read and Qualitatively Code Transcriptions of Interviews with Businesspeople from Brazil and Argentina

**Specific Time Commitments & Comments**

Research Apprentices are expected to have:

- Advanced level of Spanish and/or Portuguese
- Interest in Latin American Politics

**12.The Urban Politics of Heritagization in Post-Industrial Taipei**

*Yen-Ting Hsu*

How do cities respond to their future and past? More specifically, how do post-industrial cities manage the tension between economic development and historic preservation moving forward? The debate over land use has been a salient issue in contemporary urban politics. As more cities move away from industrial-based economy, they need to reconstruct spatial arrangements to support service- and knowledge-based economy. However, cities are places where people not only work and consume but also live and belong. Old buildings of low exchange value on the property market could in fact be meaningful to urban dwellers’ life experience. Such tension between economic development and historic preservation exacerbates especially in East Asian cities where they have enormous urban population with limited land supply. Finding ways to reconcile this controversy thus becomes a critical challenge for urban governance and redevelopment. In this project, I propose to investigate the political process of heritagization in Taipei, one of the world’s most speculative cities, to understand under what conditions are some old buildings more likely to be designated as cultural heritages but not the others. I will deepen this investigation with a comparative case analysis of two land use controversies about Taipei’s industrial past to further unveil how a post-industrial city coped with conflicting directions in embracing who it was and envisioning who it wants to become.

**Key Topics(s)**

- Asia and Asian America
- Community and Urban Sociology
- Culture
- Political Sociology

**Anticipated Tasks for RA**

Yen-Ting is in the early development stages of his dissertation, so the RAs for this research project will have a chance to work with him to collect social data and build an original dataset. To situate the RAs in the research context, Yen-Ting will give his RAs some proper trainings on

**Specific Time Commitments & Comments**

The working time is flexible. The RAs may conduct research whenever and wherever works best for them. Yet

domain knowledge and research methods. After that, he may ask the RAs to help collect and code data from various sources into the dataset he is building now. Depending on the progress, the RAs may also be involved in data analysis.

there will be a weekly team meeting for 1-1.5 hours. Meeting time included, the RAs will be anticipated to devote up to 10 hours a week.

It is required that the RAs understand writings in Traditional Chinese. It is preferred if they are interested in this topic or broadly about urban politics and culture. It will be a bonus (not mandatory) if they happen to have some prior knowledge about Geographical Information System.

### 13. Anti-femicide activism and visual culture on social media

*Ana Lopez Ricoy*

This project seeks to analyze how femicide is treated in online Instagram accounts. We will be completing a database of Instagram accounts of feminist collectives in Mexico and Latin America, and we will be collecting images that refer to femicide. We will then be analyzing the images.

#### Key Topics(s)

- Body and Embodiment
- Collective Behavior & Social Movements
- Culture
- Global and Transnational Sociology
- Latinx Sociology
- Political Sociology
- Sex and Gender

#### Anticipated Tasks for RA

- Weekly or biweekly meetings
- Data collection (image collection, compiling information on a database)
- Data analysis: iconographic analysis of images
- Writing memos

#### Specific Time Commitments & Comments

Knowledge of Spanish language is required.

Working hours are self-managed by the student. Time commitment is flexible as well, although I would expect approximately 10 hours a week (including meetings).