SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

IMPACT REVIEW

2026



LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

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MISSION STATEMENT

Loyola University Chicago School of Social Work provides transformative education for practice-informed social work. The School advances rich and diverse knowledge grounded in empowering work with clients and organizations from a participatory, person-in-environment perspective. We promote social justice through macro, meso, and micro practice. "Transformative education" reflects our commitment to engaging students to be effective change agents for social justice in a global context. "Practice-informed social work" refers to a strengths-based, client-centered focus in working with individuals, families, groups, communities, and environmental systems.



Dean's Message

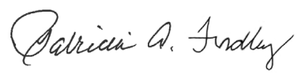
IT IS WITH GREAT PRIDE that I welcome you to the 2026 Impact Review for Loyola University Chicago's School of Social Work (LUC/SSW). Since its founding in 1914, LUC/SSW has educated some of the most dedicated clinicians, leaders, and scholars in the profession. I have experienced this as both a student, graduating with my MSW from Loyola in 1989, and now as Dean for the past two years, where it is my honor to continue our tradition of providing transformative social work education each day within the classroom and across the many diverse communities in which we practice from Chicago and far beyond.

In this past year, our school celebrated the opening of our new Behavioral Health Simulation Lab at the Water Tower campus, which is part of Loyola's Center for Simulation Education – now training students across professions including social work, nursing, and medicine on our three campuses. This space allows for scenario-based training with standardized clients, expanding how role-plays were used in the past. This state-of-the-art teaching and learning lab will be a resource for both clinical preparation and research, supporting Loyola's mission to promote excellence, equity, and innovation in behavioral health practice. The creation of the Sim Lab would not have been possible without a major infusion of Congressional funding directed to the project by U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (IL) through the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA). In an environment where federal and state funding for social work research and workforce development feels increasingly scarce, we have been honored to launch this exciting new resource.

In addition to opening the Simulation Lab, this year was a whirlwind of research, scholarship, and teaching excellence. Our faculty published and presented, mentored students, and were honored nationally and internationally for their work – always keeping our Jesuit values at the forefront – and working to ensure that our research and scholarship have real impact.

Again, I am delighted to share our 2026 Impact Review with you and welcome you to join with us in our efforts to pursue bold questions, deepen collaborations across disciplines and communities, and ensure that our scholarship helps create a world rooted in dignity, equity, and compassion.

Sincerely,



Patricia A. Findley, DrPH, MSW, LCSW
Dean and Professor

> **"This year was a whirlwind of research, scholarship, and teaching excellence."**



PATRICIA A. FINDLEY
DrPH, MSW, LCSW
Dean and Professor

By the Numbers

243 INTERNSHIP PLACEMENTS IN THE CITY OF CHICAGO

35% OF THESE WERE IN CHICAGO'S MOST UNDERSERVED NEIGHBORHOODS, INCLUDING EAST AND WEST GARFIELD PARK, NORTH LAWNDALE, LITTLE VILLAGE, UPTOWN, AND ROGERS PARK

52%

OF SSW FACULTY IDENTIFY AS BLACK, LATINE, OR ASIAN

42%

FACULTY HAD ACTIVE GRANT FUNDING IN FY 2026

44%

FACULTY PUBLISHED OR PRESENTED WITH AT LEAST ONE STUDENT IN 2025-2026

20 AVERAGE GOOGLE SCHOLAR H-INDEX SCORE OF TOP TEN PUBLISHING-ACTIVE FACULTY AT SSW

58% OF RECENT PHD GRADUATES HAVE GONE ON TO ACADEMIC POSITIONS, WITH THE REMAINDER WORKING IN CLINICAL SETTINGS

Academic Programs

Degree Programs

- BSW
- MSW Advanced Standing
- MSW
- MSW Online
- MSW Online Advanced Standing
- MSW Online Bilingual *(Maestría Bilingüe en Trabajo Social en Línea)*
- MSW Online Bilingual Advanced Standing *(El Nivel Avanzado de la Maestría en Trabajo Social Bilingüe)*
- MSW/JD
- MSW/MJ (Child/Family Law)
- MSW/MA Social Justice
- MSW/MA Women's Studies
- MSW/MPH
- Ph.D. (Social Work)

Highlights

GRANTS

Dr. Katherine Tyson McCrea received $10,000 from the Katherine A. Kendall Institute for International Social Work Education for *Advancing Transformative Equality: Co-creating International Human Rights-Based Social Work Education Supporting Persons with Disabilities*, a collaboration with Vytautas Magnus University School of Social Work in Lithuania and SSW doctoral student Neeraj Mishra.

SSW researchers received grants from the Loyola University Chicago Office of Research Services to support the following projects:

Dr. Michael Dentato
An Examination of LGBTQ+ Bartenders in Chicago and their Role in Supporting Patrons

Dr. Shannon Dunn
Healing Pandora's Box: Stories of Addiction Recovery and Resilience

Dr. John Orwat
Developing A Neighborhood Coalition for Those Living with Dementia, Alzheimers, and their Caregivers

Dr. Kate Phillippo
Scaffolding Teacher Responsiveness: A Research-Practice Partnership to Inform Training to Respond to Possible Child Abuse and Neglect

Dr. Abha Rai
The Moderating Role of Mindfulness in the Relationship Between Coping, PTSD, Sleep Quality and Healthy Family Functioning Among Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence and In-Law Abuse: An Ecological Momentary Study

Dr. LaTasha Smith
Assessing Internalized Racism and Its Health Implications for Black Women: A Multi-Phase Pilot Study Using the Trajectory of Awareness Framework

"Conducting research that addresses pressing social challenges is a powerful motivation to contribute to the betterment of society, social structures, and organizations."

—DR. GUILLERMO SANHUEZA, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

LOYOLA HONORS

Dr. Marquitta Dorsey was selected by the Loyola Center on Engaged Learning and Teaching (CELTS) as a 2026-2028 Engaged Scholarship Faculty Fellow.

Dr. Guillermo Sanhueza received the 2026 Athanasius Kircher, S.J., Award for Excellence in Research.

EXTERNAL HONORS

Dr. Marion Malcome received the IMPACT Leadership Development Fellowship from the Chicago Urban League.

Dr. Abha Rai was named to the Stanford/Elsevier Top 2% Scientists list for 2025, in recognition of her role in advancing knowledge and impacting the scientific community.

Dr. Jonathan Singer was named one of the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work's Distinguished Alumni Award Winners for 2025.

Dr. Maria Wathen received the Gratias Award from the Delta Alpha Pi Honors Society, an award for professors or faculty who champion accessibility and disability inclusion.

FACULTY UPDATES



Welcome to our new Clinical Assistant Professor, **Katya Strohl**. Professor Strohl comes to LUC/SSW from the University of Houston's doctoral program with expertise and interest in aging, health equity, interprofessional health care, simulation, and implementation science.

Dr. Abha Rai was promoted to Associate Professor, with Tenure; **Dr. Christie Mason** was promoted to Clinical Professor; and **Dr. Diana Franco** was promoted to Clinical Associate Professor.





Dr. Jeanne Sokolec, who served as BSW Program Director from 2007-2018, retired from the SSW faculty after 21 years and was appointed Clinical Associate Professor Emerita.

STUDENT UPDATES

Recent doctoral program graduate **Dr. Sungsim Lee** received the Council of Graduate School Programs Dissertation of the Year Award for Professional Schools.

This year, SSW launched a student research award program. Congratulations to our inaugural BSW Research Awardee, **Lauren Drury**, and MSW Research Awardee, **Sam Perignon**.

A New Dimension
of Social Work Education





Left: *Loyola University Chicago President Mark C. Reed, Ed.D., Simulation Lab Director Christie Mason, Ph.D., Illinois Senator Dick Durbin, and School of Social Work Dean Patricia Findley, DrPH cut the ribbon on the Simulation Lab.* ***Right:*** *Loyola School of Social Work students participating in a simulation.*



School of Social Work Assistant Professor LaTasha Smith, Ph.D. observes a simulation from the control room.

On the fourth floor of Maguire Hall at Loyola University Chicago's Water Tower Campus, a new kind of classroom is transforming how future social workers hone their craft. The School of Social Work's Behavioral Health Simulation Lab offers students the opportunity to develop and practice clinical, advocacy, and administrative skills in realistic, but low-risk settings before they encounter clients in the community.

The state-of-the-art lab is part of Loyola's Center for Simulation Education and represents a significant investment in social work education and workforce development. Featuring eleven simulation rooms designed to mirror environments social workers routinely encounter – including private offices, a family room, and rooms to replicate group spaces – the facility creates opportunities for immersive, hands-on learning that extends beyond the traditional classroom.

For social work students, the lab bridges the gap between theory and practice, advancing the concept of role-play, a longstanding method used in social work education. Through faculty-designed simulation scenarios, students interact with "standardized participants" who are trained to portray clients facing a range of behavioral health and other social challenges. These scenarios allow students to practice skills such as rapport building, assessment of client systems ranging in size from individuals to communities, assessment of suicide risk, and ethical decision-making. Rather than waiting for learning opportunities to emerge in internships, faculty can intentionally create experiences that help students build critical skills and offer immediate feedback on their performance.

"[The simulation] was a great way to bring what we're learning in class to life," said MSW student Lori Lopez. "It felt like we were working with a real client the entire time. We honestly forgot he was an actor."

"With simulation, you're trying to create an experience that is as close to real life as possible," said Simulation Lab Director and Clinical Professor Christie Mason, Ph.D. "It obviously makes a lot of sense to develop and practice skills in safe situations that are low risk but mimic real life as closely as possible so that when students are eventually in those situations, they're able to handle them more competently."

The technology installed throughout the facility allows faculty to monitor simulations in real time while maintaining an immersive experience for the student. Given the value of reflection and feedback before and after the simulations, sessions can be recorded and reviewed, giving students the opportunity to evaluate their communication skills, clinical reasoning, and professional decision-making with faculty mentors. In fact, much of the learning in the simulation process comes from the reflection, or "debrief" sessions.

The lab's impact extends beyond teaching. Faculty members also see the facility as an important research resource. With funding from the LUC Office of Research Services, School of Social Work Assistant Professor LaTasha Smith, Ph.D. is conducting a multi-phase research project that aims to strengthen the capacity of mental health trainees, supervisors, and licensed clinicians to recognize and address internalized racism in their clinical work with Black women. As part of this work, Dr. Smith will work with a simulation design specialist, clinicians, and community consultants to develop three 90-minute training modules utilizing culturally responsive scenarios that authentically represent Black women's lived experiences.

"One of the things I find most valuable about the Sim Lab is the opportunity to examine the space between what clinicians understand conceptually and how that understanding gets translated into practice," Dr. Smith said. "This is particularly important when working with complex and sensitive clinical issues because clinicians can encounter challenging moments, try out responses, and reflect on their practice without placing an actual client at risk. In that sense, simulation can both reduce the potential for harm and better prepare clinicians for real-world practice."

For Dean Patricia Findley, the lab represents more than a technological advancement. It reflects the School of Social Work's commitment to preparing future practitioners who can meet growing behavioral health needs with skill, compassion, and confidence.

"Our simulation lab provides realistic experiences that allow students to engage with diverse populations and navigate complex practice situations in a safe learning environment," Dean Findley explained. "Simulation has become a transformative tool in social work education, and Loyola's School of Social Work is among the select programs nationwide to offer this innovative training experience."

As the School of Social Work continues to expand the use of simulation-based education, the Behavioral Health Simulation Lab stands as a powerful example of how innovation can enhance both teaching and research, leading to better care for clients.

> **"[The simulation] was a great way to bring what we're learning in class to life. It felt like we were working with a real client the entire time. We honestly forgot he was an actor."**
>
> —LORI LOPEZ, MSW STUDENT

Welcome

from the Associate Dean for Research and the Director of Faculty Grants and Scholarship



MICHAEL P. DENTATO



SARAH WEISZ

WELCOME TO THE LUC/SSW OFFICE OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT 2026 Impact Review! We are proud to highlight the important and meaningful research and scholarship that is produced by our faculty and doctoral students.

This year, we welcomed a new Director of Faculty Grants and Scholarship, Sarah Weisz. Sarah helped spearhead a collaborative schoolwide effort to refresh the way we group and categorize our school's research and scholarly interests, landing on four key clusters that summarize our work: Advocacy and Social Justice, Health and Mental Health, Policy and Systems, and Social Work Practice Methods and Theories. Within each of these areas, our faculty drill down into more specific areas of interest, such as Race, Gender, and Sexuality; Social and Health Systems; and Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, among others. Over the next few pages, you will see some highlights that tell a story of a school with wide-ranging interests and clear impact upon the field of social work.

Over the past couple of years, social work educators and researchers have faced innumerable challenges. Federal funding for social science research has dwindled, and competition for the remaining sources of funding at the corporate and foundation levels has become more intense. In this environment, our faculty have remained steadfast and committed to high-quality and rigorous research while never swaying from our Jesuit values of equity, social justice, and working for and with those most in need.

We want to recognize the incredible support that SSW's research enterprise has received from Loyola's internal grant programs this year. These programs have stepped up to ensure that our research and scholarly endeavors are supported and nurtured. In particular, the LUC Office of Research Services (ORS) Research Support Grant program and the LUC Center for Health Outcomes and Informatics Research (CHOIR) Health Equity grant program have both been pivotal sources of support for our ongoing work.

We hope you enjoy exploring the exciting work led by SSW faculty and doctoral students and we look forward to another amazing year supporting them in such efforts.

Best Always,

Michael P. Dentato, PhD, MSW, LSW
Associate Dean for Research & Professor

Sarah Weisz, MA
Director of Faculty Grants and Scholarship

SSW FACULTY conduct research and scholarship that falls into one or more of the four broad research clusters shown here. In the past 18 months, faculty published more than 90 peer-reviewed articles in over 65 different journals, with almost 20% featuring students as co-authors. SSW faculty also conducted over 100 presentations at 28 different national and international conferences, including students in over a third

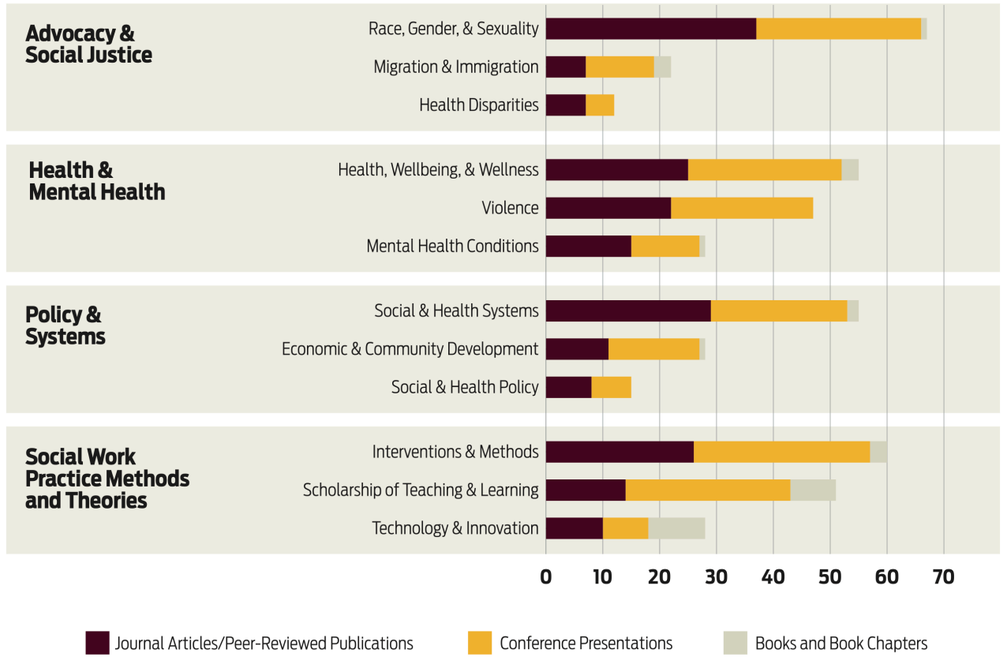
90+ PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

65 DIFFERENT JOURNALS

100+ PRESENTATIONS

28 DIFFERENT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

Faculty Research and Scholarship Clusters



Featured Research and Scholarship

The following examples highlight recent SSW faculty projects across our research and scholarship clusters.

Advocacy & Social Justice

Race, Gender, and Sexuality

Assistant Professor **LATASHA SMITH** examined how racialized, gendered, and class-based trauma can emerge within therapeutic relationships, demonstrating how these enactments can become opportunities for clinical growth and liberation-oriented practice. She will be extending this work with a new research project using SSW's Behavioral Health Simulation Lab.

Smith, L., & Wofford, N. (2025). Replications of racialized, gender and class-based trauma: Intersectional enactments within black women client–therapist–consultee-consultant relationships. *Psychoanalytic Social Work*, 1–28.

Migration and Immigration

Professor **MARIA VIDAL DE HAYMES'** book provides a guide for facilitators to lead peer emotional support groups for migrant women. Since 2022, the co-authors, including Professor Emerita **MARTA LUNDY**, and LUC MSW and doctoral program students have conducted migrant accompaniment trainings using this model. The book was originally published in Spanish in 2021 and was recently updated and translated.

Lundy, M., Hernández, G. P., Rositas-Sheftel, C., & Vidal de Haymes, M. (2026). *Emotional health for migrant women*. Universidad Iberoamericana.

Health Disparities

Associate Professor **MARQUITTA DORSEY** received a $36K grant from Loyola's Health EQ Collaborative Grant Program for EMPOWER, a project which centers wellness and whole-person well-being among incarcerated women through somatic experiencing. Health EQ grants aim to promote transdisciplinary collaboration and foster solutions to community health disparities.

Policy & Systems

Social and Health Systems

Assistant Professor **AMZIE MOORE**, Associate Professor **MARIA WATHEN**, and Professor **KATHERINE TYSON MCCREA** examined how participation as mentors in a cross-age mentoring program influences self-efficacy, and what social and environmental factors are related to changes in self-efficacy.

Moore, A., Wathen, M., Tyson McCrae, K., & Richards, M. (in press). Self-efficacy is not just about the self: African American cross-age youth mentors. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*.

Economic and Community Development

Dean and Professor **PATRICIA FINDLEY'S** recent work focuses on current societal stress and how the public expresses emotions around it. An interprofessional team is analyzing the data using sentiment analysis and topic modeling to explore emotional tone and thematic content; it is an innovative combination of AI analysis and human interaction.

Zhang, Y., Sambamoorthi, N., Wiener, R. C., Wang, H., Shen, C., Mitra, S., Findley, P. A., & Sambamoorthi, U. (2026). Exploring inflation-related public discourse relevant to social determinants of health using social media data. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 23(6), 694.

Social and Health Policy

Associate Professor **JAMES MARLEY** was invited to participate in the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes's newly formed Prevention, Data, and Research Committee. This committee oversees CDHC's work toward developing a robust network of prevention resources throughout the state and establishing data about hate in Illinois.

Social Work Practice Methods & Theories

Interventions & Methods

Professor **KATE PHILLIPPO** examined how school social workers' understanding of PK-12 teachers' strengths and needs related to student well-being can help them develop productive alliances with teachers that ultimately benefit students and the broader school community.

Williams, A. M., & Phillippo, K. (2026). P–12 educators and teachers. In K. Tan (Ed.), *Implementation guide: The National School Social Work Practice Model 2.0: Engaging with key school personnel and collaborators*. Oxford University Press.

Technology & Innovation

Associate Professor **GUILLERMO SANHUEZA** worked with MSW graduate **MARK BUNNELL** and colleagues in Chile to generate a web-based visualization prototype for policymakers and prison stakeholders that displays information on the conditions of prisons and prisoners to enhance prison management and effective post-incarceration reintegration.

Sanhueza, G., Bunnell, M., & Zúñiga, L. (2026). Promoting prison reform through collaborative research: A case study in Chile. *Social Work*, 71(3), 229–236.

Scholarship of Teaching & Learning

Professor **GOUTHAM MENON** and Clinical Professor **CHRISTIE MASON** explored the feasibility of achieving equal educational outcomes via a reduced-credit MSW program to mitigate financial and time barriers to the MSW degree. In light of reduced borrowing limits for social work graduate education, it has important implications for the profession.

Mason. C. & Menon, G. (In press). Innovation in graduate social work education: Improving rigor, affordability and access through intentional curriculum revision. *Advances in Social Work*.

Health & Mental Health

Health, Wellbeing, & Wellness

Clinical Associate Professor **DIANA FRANCO** presented at the National Latino Behavioral Health Conference on how Indigenous cosmovision-based approaches offer culturally grounded, holistic frameworks for healing that can improve engagement and outcomes in immigrant communities by restoring balance across mind, body, spirit, and community.

Franco, D., & Saavedra, J. (2025, August 9). Traditional healing interventions in mental health and community work [Conference presentation]. National Latino Behavioral Health Conference, Albuquerque, NM.

Mental Health Conditions

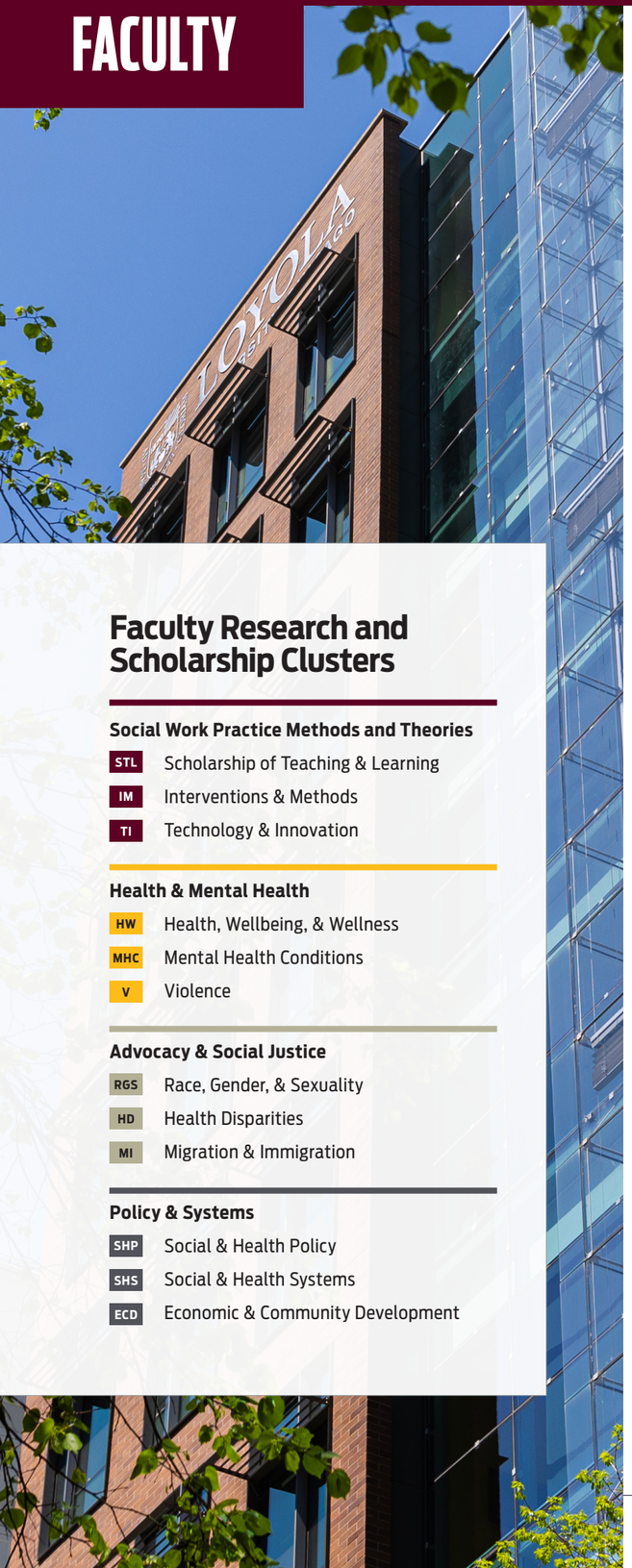
Professor **TERRY NORTHCUT'S** new book, co-authored with doctoral program alumna **DR. SHVETA KUMARIA**, explores the ways that therapeutic work is intrapsychic, interpersonal, and must also be political in its influence on the macro, social-political environment to make a difference in clients' lives and the field of mental health.

Northcut, T. B., & Kumaria, S. (2025). *Psychodynamic and cognitive behavioral theory and practice: Talking across the divide*. Oxford University Press.

Violence

Associate Professor **NATHAN PERKINS** and Professor **BRIAN KELLY**, along with doctoral student **KIMBERLY DRESSMAN**, looked at the under-studied issue of sibling violence, examining this form of family violence in a marginalized population as well as the impact of sibling violence on attachment in close relationships in adulthood.

Perkins, N. H., Dressman, K. A., Kelly, B. L., & Lees, E. R. (2026). Comparisons of physical and emotional sibling violence in childhood and adult attachment in close relationships between lesbian, gay, bisexual, and heterosexual individuals. *Journal of Family Violence, 107(1), 235-251.*



Faculty Research and Scholarship Clusters

Social Work Practice Methods and Theories

- STL Scholarship of Teaching & Learning
- IM Interventions & Methods
- TI Technology & Innovation

Health & Mental Health

- HW Health, Wellbeing, & Wellness
- MHC Mental Health Conditions
- V Violence

Advocacy & Social Justice

- RGS Race, Gender, & Sexuality
- HD Health Disparities
- MI Migration & Immigration

Policy & Systems

- SHP Social & Health Policy
- SHS Social & Health Systems
- ECD Economic & Community Development

Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty



Michael P. Dentato, PhD, MSW, LSW
Associate Dean for Research; Professor

CO-DIRECTOR - CENTER FOR FIELD INNOVATION, RESEARCH, STRATEGY, AND TRAINING (C-FIRST)

Dr. Dentato's scholarship and research centers on health and health disparities among sexual and gender minority populations and preparedness of social work students for affirming practice with diverse client populations. He also studies macro practice, interprofessional relationships, and effective non-profit leadership. Dr. Dentato is the editor of the seminal text *Social Work Practice with the LGBTQ+ Community: The Intersection of History, Health, Mental Health and Policy Factors* (Oxford University Press 2022).

STL IM HW MHC RGS HD



Marquitta S. Dorsey, PhD, MSW, MBA
BSW Program Director; Associate Professor

CO-DIRECTOR - SOCIAL WORK UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH LAB (SWURL)

Dr. Dorsey's research uses intersectionality and Black feminist thought to explore individual and collective wellbeing among Black women. A recent focus has been the role and efficacy of somatic interventions on interoception for marginalized groups of women. She has worked actively on community-centered initiatives in areas including gang interventions, juvenile justice, child welfare systems, and homelessness. Dr. Dorsey is the editor of *Understanding Diversity in Human Behavior and Development in the Social Environment* (Springer 2024).

IM HW MHC RGS HD SHP



Patricia A. Findley, DrPH, MSW, LCSW
Dean of the School of Social Work; Professor

Dr. Findley is a clinician/researcher with a long history of working with adults and youth with disabilities and chronic illnesses. Her research interests are related to the exploration of numerous issues that impact these vulnerable populations and the care they receive in the community. Dr. Findley is a strong advocate for the integration of behavioral health in primary care, particularly for medically underserved populations. Her current work with an interdisciplinary team of health, behavioral health, and health economics researchers focuses on how economic stress can impact mental health. She is the senior associate editor of the *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation* and on the editorial board of *Health and Social Work*.

STL TI HW HD SHP



Brian L. Kelly, PhD, MSW, CADC
Doctoral Program Director; Professor

Dr. Kelly's research explores current and historical uses of recreational, art, and music-based activities in social work and related fields, building upon his background in audio engineering. He combines his clinical experience with individuals with substance use issues, and those experiencing homelessness and chronic health conditions to advance social work practice. Dr. Kelly is an advocate for the advancement of social work practice with groups and prioritizes group work in his teaching, research, and scholarship.

STL IM RGS SHS



Caleb Kim, PhD, MSW, MDiv, LCSW
Associate Professor

Dr. Kim's research involves child/youth violence, global social work education, suicide, and Asian American immigrant youth/family issues. He is also interested in developing university-community collaborative projects that support at-risk youth and their families. He has successfully completed several federally funded projects such as Minority Youth Violence Prevention II, HRSA's Scholarship for Disadvantage Students, and SAMHSA's GLS Campus Suicide Prevention.

V MI SHS



Marion Malcome, PhD, LCSW
Assistant Professor

CO-DIRECTOR - SOCIAL WORK UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH LAB (SWURL)

Dr. Malcome is a scholar, clinician, and community-engaged researcher committed to mental health equity for Black women, mothers, and families. Using quantitative and qualitative methods, her scholarship is at the intersection of race(ism), place, and mental health. Her work informs the development of antiracist, culturally grounded practices, policies, and models of care, such as the Heal togetHER mental wellness model. She co-leads an antiracism clinical training practice and successfully sustains community partnerships advancing mental health equity.

HW MHC V RGS HD



James Marley, PhD, LCSW
Associate Professor

Dr. Marley has over 35 years of social work practice experience in adult mental health and family therapy, and provides numerous trainings and lectures related to ethics, mental health, and family therapy. He works on state and federal domestic terrorism and targeted violence prevention initiatives and co-chairs the ethics committee for a national network of clinicians and organizations focused on this work. He has been on the editorial board for the *Clinical Social Work Journal* since 2004.

IM MHC V RGS SHS



Goutham M. Menon, PhD, MA, MBA
Professor

Dr. Menon serves as Fractional CEO of the Network for Social Work Management (NSWM) and is a former Secretary-General of the International Consortium for Social Development (ICSD). A 2024 NASW Social Work Pioneer and former Dean of the LUC School of Social Work, Dr. Menon's expertise spans social work education, organizational leadership, macro practice, technology in human services, and global social development. During his deanship, he launched the first bilingual (English/Spanish) online MSW in the continental U.S.

STL TI MHC MI SHP ECD

FACULTY



Amzie Moore II, PhD, MSW
Assistant Professor

Dr. Moore studies school-based interventions and their impact on components of resilience among urban youth, using mixed method approaches and participatory action research designs to evaluate and develop culturally-relevant programs for marginalized youth. Dr Moore has varied research interests, which include theory development, research methodologies, philosophy of science, indigenous research methodologies, the history of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, and black social workers.

STL IM SHP SHS

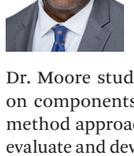


Terry B. Northcut, PhD, LCSW
Professor

LUCIAN AND CAROL WELCH MATUSAK ENDOWED PROFESSOR

Dr. Northcut's scholarship and teaching in the MSW/ PhD programs focuses on social work pedagogy, religion/spirituality in social work, and integrative clinical practice. Dr. Northcut's research with interdisciplinary colleagues continues to better prepare non-traditional PhD applicants to apply for and succeed in doctoral education. She is the co-author of *Psychodynamic and Cognitive Behavioral Theory and Practice: Talking across the Divide* (Lyceum Books 2025).

STL IM HW MHC



John Orwat, PhD, LCSW
Associate Dean for Faculty Development; Professor

CO-DIRECTOR - CENTER FOR FIELD INNOVATION, RESEARCH, STRATEGY, AND TRAINING (C-FIRST)

Dr. Orwat's research and teaching interests are in health services research, health and behavioral health policy, and clinical practice. He has successfully received numerous HRSA and SAMHSA grants over the years supporting student learning in areas such as the SBIRT model, interprofessional practice, behavioral health, workforce development, and substance use.

STL MHC SHP SHS



Nathan H. Perkins, PhD, MSW, MS
Associate Professor

CO-DIRECTOR - RESEARCH AND INNOVATION LAB (RAIL)

Dr. Perkins' professional and research interests include physical and emotional sibling violence and the intersection with other types of family violence. His research explores parental perceptions of sibling violence as well as the lack of policy that exists to address this form of family violence. Dr. Perkins also works to educate social workers on sibling violence, ensuring they have the necessary knowledge and skills to help children, individuals, and families through prevention and intervention efforts.

STL MHC V SHP



Kate Phillippo, PhD, LCSW
Professor, Schools of Social Work and Education (Joint Appointment)

ASSOCIATE DEAN - THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Dr. Phillippo's work centers on youth experiences of schools and schooling, policy and practice attunement to youth needs, and on how to help develop schools into more growthful places for young people. Her research examines how stakeholders develop and carry out education policy and practice, particularly equity-oriented urban education policy and student wellness policy, how local, organizational, and professional contexts shape that enactment, and implications for racial and educational equity.

MHC RGS SHS



Julia Pryce, PhD, LCSW
Professor

DIRECTOR OF MISSION INTEGRATION, PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS; ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, FACULTY CENTER FOR IGNATIAN PEDAGOGY

Dr. Pryce believes in the transformative potential of relationships, and the ways positive non-parental adults can facilitate collaborative growth with the young people they support. Her research focuses on the role of mentoring in the fields of youth development and child welfare, and on the attunement process through which supportive, non-parental adults connect with young people. Dr. Pryce's teaching focuses on the areas of developmental theory, research, and youth development.

STL IM TI HW SHS



Abha Rai, PhD, MSW
Associate Professor

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FACULTY ENGAGEMENT & INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION, OIDEI; CO-DIRECTOR - RESEARCH AND INNOVATION LAB (RAIL)

Dr. Rai is an internationally recognized community-based scholar, interventionist, and implementation science researcher focused on mental health equity across local and global contexts. Her work focuses on preventing domestic violence through culturally responsive interventions, understanding the correlates of violence, and promoting help-seeking behaviors among vulnerable populations. Dr. Rai's recent projects explore the use of wearable technologies, digital platforms, and artificial intelligence to enhance well-being and employment readiness for underserved communities.

IM TI HW V SHP ECD



Guillermo Sanhueza, PhD, MSW
Associate Professor

Dr. Sanhueza has vast experience of conducting interdisciplinary, collaborative research and evaluation in prison settings in Chile and Latin America. His specialty is in quantitative methods, including data analysis and visualization, in addition to primary data collection in both prison and community settings, with a special consideration towards special populations who are incarcerated such as women, elderly, LGBTQ+, juveniles, foreign prisoners.

TI V MI SHP SHS



Shirley R. Simon, LCSW, ACSW
Associate Professor

Professor Simon is a long-time social work educator and practitioner, recently completing 50 years as a faculty member within the Loyola-Mundelein community. She serves as Book Review Editor in North America for the journal *Groupwork* and develops and implements the Group Work Continuing Education Series, a unique virtual program of contemporary group work trainings. Research and scholarship interests include group work education, online instruction, connecting students to professional membership associations, and social work doctoral dissertations focused on group work.

STL IM TI



Jonathan B. Singer, PhD, LCSW
Professor

Dr. Singer's research and scholarship centers upon youth suicide and social work technology. He is an NASW Pioneer, author of over 100 publications, and his research has been featured in national and international media outlets including NPR, BBC, Fox, Time Magazine, and The Guardian. Dr. Singer is the author of the best-selling textbook Suicide in Schools: *A Practitioner's Guide to Multi-level Prevention, Assessment, Intervention, and Postvention* (Routledge 2024) as well as the co-editor of the book *Podcasting in Social Work Education A Way Forward for Educators* (Routledge 2025).

STL TI HW MHC SHS

“It is so energizing to be in an environment where people are producing amazing scholarship, not because they are afraid not to or being feeling pressured to, but because they are inspired by their deep desire to make a difference in this world.”

— DR. JONATHAN SINGER, PROFESSOR

FACULTY



Shweta Singh, PhD, MSW
Online MSW Assistant Director; Associate Professor

Dr. Singh's research focuses on advancing the well-being of girls and women through policy, practice, program, and mixed-methods research. Her community contributions include creative storytelling, film production, and community radio. Dr. Singh's film 'Why Don't You Speak Nina", was selected for the South Asian Film Festival Chicago, and her radio show "Global Desi World and Women" on WLUW received the Outstanding Community Service in Media and Social Work Award from the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois.

STL HW MHC SHP



LaTasha Smith, PhD, LCSW, CGP
Assistant Professor

Dr. Smith's scholarship, teaching, and clinical practice center on racial trauma, intersectionality, liberation, and the professional development of Black women clinicians. Her research examines how racism, sexism, and other interlocking systems of oppression shape identity, relational life, clinical presence, and the therapeutic process. She developed the Trajectory of Awareness Model, a practice-based framework for understanding how clinicians recognize and respond to internalized racial oppression in themselves and their clinical work.

IM TI MHC RGS



Katherine Tyson McCrea, PhD, MDiv, LCSW
Professor
PI, EMPOWERING COUNSELING PROGRAM

Dr. Tyson McCrea has an honorary doctorate from Vytautas Magnus University and was awarded Graduate Faculty Member of the Year by Loyola in 2019. She has provided social work consultation nationally and internationally with a focus on advancing equity for youth marginalized by race, income, and/or disability. Dr. Tyson McCrea has served as PI for the Empowering Counseling Program, Participatory Science Initiative (ECP-PSI) since 2006, using participatory, mixed methods grounded in human rights and strengths-based perspectives to optimize services and policies for marginalized youth and persons with disabilities.

STL IM RGS HD SHS ECD

"Research and scholarship at Loyola SSW are distinctive because they are deeply practice-informed, community-engaged, and grounded in social justice."

— DR. LATASHA SMITH, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR



Maria Vidal de Haymes, PhD
Professor
DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE ACCOMPANIMENT (CIRA

Dr. Vidal de Haymes' research focuses on migration studies; unaccompanied immigrant minors: immigrant mental health, well-being and integration; child welfare; parent engagement in schools, and social work education. She is Director of the Center for Immigrant and Refugee Accompaniment, co-editor of the *Journal of Poverty* and serves on local, national, and international boards including the National Pastoral Migratoria, the Red Jesuita con Migrantes Centroamérica y Norteamérica, and Cicero Family Service.

STL HD MI SHS ECD



Maria V. Wathen, PhD, LCSW
Associate Professor

Dr. Wathen's local and globally focused research examines how social policy, nonprofit and governmental systems, and community dynamics shape access to and delivery of social services, particularly for vulnerable populations. Her work also explores how public benefits, nonprofit supports, and policy environments interact to affect individual and family outcomes. Her newest research examines AI implementation and social service employee well-being.

STL TI HW SHS ECD



Centers, Institutes, and Research Labs

SSW offers unique opportunities for faculty and students to learn and work together, conduct research, and engage with agency and community partners. These centers, institutes, and research labs provide hands-on training for the next generation of social work researchers.

C-FIRST

The Center for Field Innovation, Research, Strategy, and Training (C-FIRST) engages in practice-based research that supports the sustainable implementation of innovative interventions to meet the unique challenges faced by organizations, clinicians, and students across Chicago and suburban communities.

CIRA

The Center for Immigrant & Refugee Accompaniment (CIRA) engages in collaborative research, advocacy, community engagement, critical inquiry, and joint action through curriculum innovation, professional development, interdisciplinary and international research, and accompaniment.

ECP-PSI

The Empowering Counseling Program - Participatory Science Initiative (ECP) serves youth of color and their families residing in low-income Chicago communities through advocacy for human rights and by focusing on the strengths and cultural wealth of participants.

FCTI

The Fostering Connections Training Institute (FCTI) engages child welfare professionals, adult mentors, and foster parents in evidence-based trainings focused on relationship development and psychological self-sufficiency, leading to improved relationships with youth in care.

RAIL

The Research and Innovation Lab (RAIL) fosters a space where students can critically explore pressing social and economic issues, generate meaningful knowledge, and advance evidence-based practice through collaborative inquiry with other students and under the mentorship of lab directors.

SWURL

The Social Work Undergraduate Research Lab (SWURL) provides undergraduate social work majors and minors with opportunities to actively engage in applied research projects under faculty mentorship, with particular attention to conducting culturally-responsive research with marginalized populations.

Clinical Faculty



Binita M. Donohue, MSW, LCSW
Clinical Assistant Professor

Professor Donahue's passion is to help schools and organizations recognize systems of oppression and replace them with systems that are generative. Growing from the understanding that a free and appropriate education continues to be the only entitlement program available to every person in the U.S., Professor Donohue's work positions schools as far more than a space for teaching and learning.

STL MHC SHS



Shannon Dunn, PhD, LCSW, CRADC
Clinical Associate Professor
DIRECTOR-ADVANCED CADC CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Dr. Dunn is a clinical social worker, educator, and author with more than 40 years of experience in behavioral health. Her clinical background includes support for individuals and families dealing with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and severe addictions, and spans every level of the mental health care system. Dunn is the author of *Healing the Distress of Psychosis: Listening with Psychotic Ears* (Oxford University Press 2018).

STL TI MHC SHS



Diana Franco, DSW, LCSW-R
Clinical Associate Professor

Dr. Franco's work is focused on migration trauma among immigrant, refugee, and asylum-seeking minors, as well as Indigenous healing practices. Her research centers on trauma-informed care for immigrant youth, emphasizing culturally responsive services delivered in native languages to meet complex needs.

STL IM MHC MI SHS ECD



Priscila R. Freire, PhD, LCSW
Associate Dean for Academics; Clinical Associate Professor

Dr. Freire's areas of practice experience include intimate partner violence across the lifespan, perpetrators of intimate partner violence, trauma-informed practice, children and families, practice with immigrant communities, and mental health across diverse communities. She was involved in the development and launching of the Online Bilingual Program at LUC/SSW.

STL IM MHC V RGS



Rana Hong, PhD, LCSW, RPT-S
MSW Program Director; Clinical Assistant Professor

Dr. Hong's research centers on trauma, mental health, measurement development, and evaluation studies. Informed by more than 25 years of clinical experience across the lifespan, her scholarship integrates practice-based expertise to advance evidence-informed clinical practice. She is the co-author of *Integrative Theraplay® Approach for Children on the Autism Spectrum* (Jessica Kingsley Publishers 2023) and the co-editor of two other books on the Theraplay® method.

STL IM MHC HD MI



Maribel Lopez, EdD, MSW
Online Bilingual MSW Assistant Director; Clinical Associate Professor

Dr. López is passionate about empowering and equipping women, including women in ministry, through education, mentorship, leadership development, and faith-centered community engagement. Dr. López is actively involved in community education initiatives focused on women's empowerment, early childhood education, substance use awareness, domestic violence prevention, and strengthening families and communities.

STL HW RGS MI



Christie Mason, PhD, LCSW, RPT-S, NMT Level II
Clinical Professor
DIRECTOR OF SIMULATION

Dr. Mason has more than 25 years of clinical practice experience with clients across the lifespan, specializing in working with children who have experienced trauma. She holds Registered Play Therapist – Supervisor and Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics Level II certifications. Dr. Mason's areas of research interest include simulation in social work education, neuroscience in social work education, play therapy, and adoption and attachment.

STL IM TI

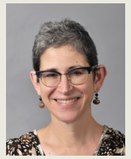


Ivan Medina, MSW
Clinical Assistant Professor

Professor Medina is a practicing social worker who incorporates his rich community experience into his teaching within the classroom. He has served on several non-profit boards across Chicago and teaches in areas including policy, non-profit management, philanthropy, and service delivery.

MI SHP SHS ECD

Faculty Emeriti



Susan Grossman, PhD
Professor Emerita



Terri Kilbane, PhD
Associate Professor Emerita



Marta Lundy, PhD
Professor Emerita



Jeanne Sokolec, EdD, MSW
Clinical Associate Professor Emerita



Doctoral Students and Candidates

Recent Doctoral Graduates



David Apopo, PhD, MSW

akennedy7@luc.edu

DISSERTATION: *Experiencing Punishment and Discipline A Descriptive Phenomenological Study of Parental Lived Experiences with Zero Tolerance Approach in Kibera Schools, Nairobi, Kenya*

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Equity, social justice, social and public policy, poverty, inclusion



Marjorie Colindres, PhD, MSW, LCSW

mcolind@luc.edu

DISSERTATION: *Multidisciplinary School Personnel's Lived Experiences Working with Newcomer Latine Students: An Exploratory Phenomenological Study*

RESEARCH INTERESTS: School social work, mental health in school settings, school social workers education, Latinx students and bilingualism, social workers working with immigrants and refugees



Sungsim Lee, PhD, MA, MSW

slee43@luc.edu

DISSERTATION: *A Qualitative Study of Gratitude Practice Among Won Buddhist Older Adults and Implications for Gerontological Social Work*

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Spirituality, religion, and mental health for older adults; eco-spiritual social work; spiritually based practices/interventions for human service organizations



Brianna Sorensen, PhD, MSW, LCSW, CADC

bsorensen2@luc.edu

DISSERTATION: *The Journey to Fat Activism: A Grounded Theory Study Exploring Identity, Awareness, and Community Building in the Pursuit of Fat Liberation*

RESEARCH INTERESTS: LGBTQ+ studies, fat studies, mezzo and macro practice, harm reduction with eating disorders and substance use

Post-Doctoral Research Fellow



Celeste Sanchez, PhD

csanchez11@luc.edu

DISSERTATION: *Abriendo Caminos: A Case Study of an Online Bilingüe MSW Program*

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Latine immigrant communities, underrepresented students within social work education

Doctoral Candidates



Yigermal Demissie Ayalew, MSW

yayalew@luc.edu

DISSERTATION: *Adaptation Strategies of Ethiopian Community-Based Organizations in the United States: Navigating the Dynamics of Community Legitimacy, Migration Policy, and the Organizational Ecology*

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Nonprofit change and adaptation strategies, participatory program development and evaluation, intergenerational dynamics in organizations, methodology and the nature of knowledge in social work



Larry (Leo) Davis, MPH, MSW

Ldavis17@luc.edu

DISSERTATION: *Rebuilding Fractured Attachments: The Role of Fatherhood Interventions in Sustaining Well-being, Mental Health, Child Attachment, and Parenting Relationships for Fathers Impacted by the Criminal Justice System*

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Black fatherhood engagement, child/ foster youth development, social policy, mass incarceration, homelessness, mental health, social entrepreneurship, poverty, and racism



David Apopo, PhD, Marjorie Colindres, PhD, Brianna Sorensen, PhD, and Sungsim Lee, PhD celebrated commencement in May 2026.

Katrina Herweh, MASW, LISW, CDCA

kherweh@luc.edu



DISSERTATION: *Recollections of Social Support Peri-Medical Trauma: A Qualitative Narrative Study*

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Pediatric trauma and medical trauma, screening tool for pediatric trauma, hospital discharge and mental health treatment referral, impact of medical events

Ruri Kim, MA, LPC

rkim8@luc.edu



DISSERTATION: *Forgiveness, Executive Functioning (EF), Psychological Self-Sufficiency (PSS), and Hopefulness Among Job Seekers with Low-Income*

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Mental health and social justice; mental health and workforce development; culturally-responsive and anti-oppressive mental health prevention, intervention, and postvention

Sharitza Rivera, AM, LCSW

srivera4@luc.edu



DISSERTATION: *Student Ready vs. College Ready: The Impact of Basic Needs Funding on the Sense of Belonging of Low Income College Students*

RESEARCH INTERESTS: First-generation and low-income college students, peer mentorship, social and cultural capital, poverty and welfare in the United States, social class, systematic change and innovation



Nora Wynn, AM

nwynn@luc.edu

DISSERTATION: *Exploring Experiences of Desire with Queer Young People through Photovoice*

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Adolescent sexual health and development, sex education, peer-led education, positive youth development, feminist theory, participatory research methods



Rachel Young, MSW

ryoung9@luc.edu

DISSERTATION: *Community Responses to the Illinois Quantum and Microelectronics Park in South Shore, Chicago*

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Environmental social work, use of nexus thinking to analyze interrelationships among systems to address resource challenges, technology and social policy, equitable housing and food systems

DOCTORAL PROGRAM

Doctoral Students



Emmanuel Agyei-Poku, MSW

eagyeipoku@luc.edu

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Child rights and welfare, childhood trauma, adolescent mental health, family systems, human trafficking, migration and resettlement, community-based practices



Rodney Allen, AM

rallen1@luc.edu

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Parental inclusion in IEP and 504 Plans, children and adolescents with mental health diagnoses



Sayeja Aryal, MSW

saryal1@luc.edu

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Youth mental health, early psychosocial support, preventive approaches, migration and psychosocial wellbeing, social work practice and policy



Jeneba (Zaynab) Berety, MSW

jberety@luc.edu

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Resettlement practices of immigration agencies, Black immigrants navigation of racial identity within the context of their new lives in the U.S.

When we review doctoral student applicants, we think about them individually, but also how they will fit into a cohort. We're proud to have a group of students that want to be a part of a community and collaborate with faculty and each other."

—DR. BRIAN KELLY, PROFESSOR AND DOCTORAL PROGRAM DIRECTOR



Alicia Bradford, MSW

abradford@luc.edu

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Intersections of policy advocacy and community organizing, health policy, policy advocacy and Black maternal health, social justice interventions



Luciana Di Biagio, MSW, LGSW

ldibiagio@luc.edu

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Social policy and welfare, intersectionality and socioeconomic inequity, social service delivery and improvement, participatory research methods



Kimberly Dressman, MSW

kdressman@luc.edu

RESEARCH INTERESTS: LGBTQIA+ community and the intersection of research, social work practice, and social justice; implications of health care policies and practices on gender diverse individuals



Chinwe (Blessing) Egbuogu, MSW

cegbuogu@luc.edu

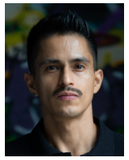
RESEARCH INTERESTS: Health equity, maternal and child health, family-centered treatment for substance use disorders, social justice activism to promote inclusivity



Uday Sharad Joshi, MSW, MEd

ujoshi@luc.edu

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Creative arts practice, voice reclamation and cultural affirmation, emancipatory practice, participatory research, measurement and instrument development



David Ledesma Feregrino, MA

dledesmaferegrino@luc.edu

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Health care access and disparities, LGBTQ+ studies, Latinx communities and social inequalities, intersectionality, social inclusion of historically marginalized populations



Kai Lehocky, MSW

klehocky@luc.edu

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Sexual and gender minorities, gender diverse identities, neurodiversity (autism and twice-exceptionality), post-colonial resilience, and public policy advocacy



Elisa E. Leyva Cea, MA

eleyvacea@luc.edu

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Clinical interventions for immigrants, refugees, and mixed-status communities; transgenerational, complex trauma, and PTSD; community-based interventions



Sabina Lumesberger-Draschl, AM

slumesberger@luc.edu

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Environmental justice, ecosocial work theory and practice, international comparative welfare studies, human rights–based approaches to social policy and practice



Neeraj Mishra, PhD

nmishra@luc.edu

RESEARCH INTERESTS: History and philosophy of social work, critical disability studies and social work pedagogy, mindfulness and social justice, qualitative research methodology



Ahyun Moon, MSW, MA, MPP

amoon1@luc.edu

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Domestic violence, adverse childhood experience, attachment, psychological self-sufficiency, economic self-sufficiency, transition of vulnerable youth to adulthood



For me, scholarship is not only about academic achievement or publications, it also takes into account the work we do in society to uplift, empower, and better our communities."

—DR. MARIBEL LOPEZ, CLINICAL ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
OFFICE OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

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