The College of Liberal Arts Research Academy (CLARA)

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Special edition: Sabbatical

October 20th, SC 220, 3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Celebrating publications in Liberal Arts.

PURDUE UNIVERSITY

RESEARCH ACADEMY | College of Liberal Arts

J. Jill Suitor

Sociology



Dr. Suitor's website

Year of Sabbatical (Location): 2024 (West Lafayette)

Within-Family Differences Across Two Decades and Three Generations

The central goal for my Sabbatical leave in 2024 was to extend the scope of the Within-Family Differences Study (WFDS), a three-wave, three-generation study of 566 families in middle and later life that I began in 2001 (supported by NIA). The most recent wave of the project (2020-2025) has continued our investigation of patterns and consequences of parental favoritism and disfavoritism in adulthood, with an emphasis on how these patterns and processes are altered by changes in the lives of both generations, including parents' development of cognitive impairment and the deaths of parents and siblings. We also broadened the scope of the WFDS by developing new foci on the roles of both digital communication and religious similarity in parent-child relations and well-being as parents entered their 90s and their adult children entered their 60s. Finally, we began investigating whether the patterns we had observed between parents and their Baby Boomer adult children were mirrored in the Baby Boomer's relationships with their own Gen Z and Gen Alpha offspring in their 20s and 30s.

Shawn Bauldry

Sociology



Dr. Bauldry's website

Year of Sabbatical (Location): 2025 (West Lafayette)

Introduction to Structural Equation Models (Book)

Social and behavioral scientists routinely grapple with analyses involving complex relationships among abstract concepts that resist straightforward measurement. Structural equation models (SEMs) provide a powerful statistical framework for analyzing these relationships by offering two key capabilities. First, SEMs specify latent variables representing abstract concepts, linked to observed indicators through a measurement model that accounts for measurement error. Second, SEMs accommodate multiple endogenous variables within integrated models, allowing researchers to translate complex theoretical frameworks into statistical models. This book introduces structural equation modeling for social and behavioral scientists, beginning with the general model and covering model identification and specification, estimation, and evaluation. Extended attention is given incorporating contemporary developments in causal inference and explicating underlying assumptions with an emphasis on mediation analysis. In addition, a chapter is devoted to SEMs with categorical or limited endogenous variables. This introduction provides a foundation for readers interested in advanced extensions including latent growth models and latent class analysis. The volume equips readers to specify SEMs reflecting theoretical complexity, fit models to data, and critically evaluate results—essential skills for researchers analyzing the intricate relationships characterizing social and behavioral phenomena.

Jessica Sturm

School of Languages & Cultures



Dr. Sturm's website

Year of Sabbatical (Location): Spring 2025 (West Lafayette and Paris)

Sur le terrain: Sports and Social Justice in France

I spent two months in France during my sabbatical to continue my research on sports in France for my project, Sur le terrain: Sports and Social Justice in France. I am writing a textbook for third-year and above French students to study French culture through the lens of sports and social justice as it is expressed in access to sports.

Scott Feld

Sociology



Dr. Feld's website

Year of Sabbatical (Location): 2024 (Chicago)

Theoretical Extensions of the Friendship Paradox and Estimating Variation in Causal Effects in Experiments

I advanced two different theoretical projects: Theoretical Implications of the Friendship Paradox in Networks Estimating Variation In Effects in Experiments. One advance used the Friendship Paradox to estimate the size of an unknown population. Analysts have estimated the size of unknown populations (e.g., people who disappeared in a natural disaster) based upon the numbers reported by a random sample. We propose a new way to use the random sample reports on a known reference population to provide potentially better estimates of the target population.