Welcome, Donna!

Donna K. Ginther, an economist with deep experience in social science and policy-related research, has been named director of IPSR. We are delighted to welcome our longtime colleague and friend to this role. In addition to her broad portfolio of research—including research on the significant effects mentoring can have—she brings years of experience as the director of the Center for Science, Technology & Economic Policy. Thanks to the KU Center for Research for leading the search process, the members of the search committee, and all who contributed to the process.

Read more about Ginther’s work: https://today.ku.edu/economics-professor-lead-kus-institute-policy-social-research

We’re home and healthy (for now) and we hope you are too

Following guidelines from the University of Kansas, the Institute for Policy & Social Research is operating remotely for the remainder of the Spring 2020 semester. Events have been moved online, postponed, or
cancelled.

As we settle into new patterns of living, whether they turn out to be short- or long-term, IPSR staff are here to help. If you want to start a new project or find funding to support your ongoing research, please get in touch with us. Our staff can assist with challenges you’re experiencing managing a currently-funded project. We also offer support with data analysis and visualization and with document preparation.

IPSR Director Donna K. Ginther is available to meet with you virtually if you have ideas or questions you would like to discuss. Feel free to write her at dginther@ku.edu to set up an appointment. Should you need assistance with a grant proposal, please contact Nancy Cayton Myers (ncmyers@ku.edu). If you have questions about a sponsored research project please contact Jena Gunter (kujena@ku.edu). All other questions can be directed to ipsr@ku.edu or 785-864-3701.

For more information about current KU policies: https://coronavirus.ku.edu

Nominate a student for the IPSR Doctoral Research Fellows

IPSR is still accepting nominations for the 2020-21 IPSR Doctoral Research Fellows. This program helps to develop the next generation of social science scholars by providing graduate students with support in interdisciplinary social science research.

IPSR affiliates who wish to nominate a promising doctoral student may e-mail IPSR Doctoral Fellows (ipsrfellows@ku.edu) by Friday, May 1. Please attach a one-page letter of support describing the student’s suitability for the program. Program details, including eligibility and application processes, are available in the call for applications. 

To learn more, contact Whitney Onasch, wonasch@ku.edu

Be Counted!

If you have not yet filled out your 2020 Census form, we ask that you complete it as soon as possible. We want to make sure every Kansan is counted, especially with political representation and billions of dollars of much-needed funding at stake. Find more information about the Census: https://ipsr.ku.edu/ksdata/census/2020/

NSF funding for Surveillance Studies Research Center project and research on farmers’ decisions about technology

_Safeguarding and Enhancing the Experience of Public Internet Users_

About one-third of the U.S. population has no computer and/or broadband internet access at home, or they can only connect through mobile devices such as smartphones. Many of these individuals turn to public libraries as their primary provider of computers and internet access. While an important resource and a public good, those shared library computers have significant limitations, including the inability of users to save their functional preferences or protect their privacy and security settings. With every visit to a library, these computer users must start their digital lives anew. And some evidence suggests that marginalized, public-access internet users face a host of privacy, security and surveillance threats.

A team of researchers at the University of Kansas has coined the term “digitally homeless” to describe this population’s experiences. Led by Bill Staples, professor of sociology and director of the Surveillance Studies Research Center; Perry Alexander, AT&T Foundation Distinguished Professor of Electrical Engineering & Computer Science and director of the Information and Telecommunication Technology Center; and Drew Davidson, assistant professor of electrical engineering & computer science, the team has recently been awarded a new grant from the National Science Foundation titled “Safeguarding and Enhancing the Experience of Public Internet Users,” funded through NSF’s Secure and Trustworthy Cyberspace program.
The two-year, $516,000 grant will support research about how public internet users navigate the internet and what security threats they face. One outcome of this work will be development of a device the team calls PUPS—public user privacy and security—an isolated, portable, virtual computing environment on a USB stick. It will provide a “digital home” to users, giving them a functional, seamless computing experience from one session and device to the next. The team will also expand and diversify their research on public library computer users and conduct experiments to learn about the security and surveillance threats that these users face.

Read more about this project at http://news.ku.edu/2020/04/07/grant-will-fund-research-safeguard-public-internet-users

Exploring On-farm Innovation, Environmental Change, and Rural Livelihoods in the US Hop Industry

Like other farmers, U.S. hop farmers face pressure from environmental change and a global marketplace. And like farmers of commodity crops, hop farmers rely on technologies to collect data and make data-driven decisions. Unlike most other farmers, hop farmers pursue innovations themselves rather than relying on outside expertise.

The National Science Foundation’s Science and Technology Studies program awarded a $15,150 grant to Matt Comi’s project “Exploring on-farm innovation, environmental change, and rural livelihoods in the US hop industry.” A doctoral candidate in the University of Kansas Department of Sociology, Comi will explore how farmers persist—or not—in genuine decision-making about future iterations of their farms. Technology is a key part of how farmers shape their futures. It is also central to a nexus of pressures that farmers have faced since the 1980s: environmental change, biodiversity loss and rising costs.

“In contemporary data-driven agriculture, farmers are what I call ‘distributed,’ meaning that many actors participate in every farming decision,” Comi said. “Studying the ‘distributed farmer’ helps us see nuances about why corn and soy farmers don’t have a lot of agency and are economically and culturally ‘locked in’ particular farming techniques. These techniques often benefit non-farmers like agrochemical and seed production companies more than they benefit rural communities. Large hop farmers in the Yakima Valley have innovated their own on-farm technologies and techniques, and this shows us that these ‘distributed farmers’ are not always subject to being ‘locked in.’”

Read more about this project at: https://today.ku.edu/2020/03/09/graduate-student-awarded-nsf-grant-study-farmers-decisions-about-technology

IPSR publishes resources on COVID-19 in Kansas

IPSR staff have been marshalling data to understand the preparation of Kansas for a pandemic and to track the impact of COVID-19 on the state. Narrated slideshows address different aspects of the state response to the novel coronavirus, including the necessity and value of the stay-at-home order, the economic effects of the virus, and potential policy responses to mitigate the financial challenges families are facing. These resources are published on the IPSR website at https://ipsr.ku.edu/covid19/

Spotlight on Care Keeps Shining

Spotlight on Care, a joint effort from the Center for Compassionate & Sustainable Communities and The Commons, has not only continued but expanded its programming as KU has moved online. Now, Spotlight on Care features two sessions a week: one on Mondays at 12 noon and one on Wednesdays at 12 noon. Join us remotely to practice the values of care and compassion.

Find information on upcoming sessions on https://thecommons.ku.edu/coming-events or on IPSR’s social media pages at https://www.facebook.com/KUIPSR/ and https://twitter.com/KU_IPSR
**Spring 2020 Center for the Study of Injustice events**

Dr. Stacey Vanderhurst presented on her research on why women in Nigeria participate in high-risk migration at the Kansas Union. Based on multiple years of ethnographic research in Nigeria, Dr. Vanderhurst explained how many women migrants are often detained in anti-trafficking rehabilitations centers before they migrate, as the government argues they are preemptively preventing the trafficking of these migrants. She provided a detailed examination of the contrasts of how government leaders, international anti-trafficking organizations, and migrants experience and understand trafficking and exploitation. More than 30 people were in attendance.

As part of the ongoing IPSR Qualitative Working Group, Dr. Jay T. Johnson presented an examination of how different methodological frameworks may be used to advance more authentic and liberatory research partnerships with communities. Dr. Johnson sees value in combining feminist methodologies and indigenous methodologies, because both frameworks center on partnerships with marginalized communities, work to understand power-relationships in society, and open new standpoints of knowledge creation. He also discussed how these lenses can give new insight on the type of research we should be doing.

CSI hosted a panel on Partnering with Migratory & Seasonal Agricultural Workers: Building Capacity for Delivery and Research. This panel included KU faculty and community members, including Cheryl Holmes, Research Project Director, University of Kansas School of Social Welfare; Suzanne Gladney, Founder and Executive Director, Migrant Farmworkers Assistance Fund; Toniann Richard, CEO, Health Care Collaborative of Rural Missouri; and Kimberly Reynolds, Assistant Regional Administrator, Region VII (IA, KS, MO, NE), Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). They presented how to best work with migratory agricultural workers. Panelists shared resources and models of best practices for working in partnership with migrant and seasonal farmworkers. This event was hosted at the Arterra Event Gallery and about 35 people were in attendance, both from KU and the surrounding area.

*Learn more about the Center for the Study of Injustice at [ipsr.ku.edu/CSI](http://ipsr.ku.edu/CSI)*

**HERS summer internship program deferred**

Unfortunately, the 2020 HERS summer internship program is being deferred due to the critical public health considerations caused by the spread of the novel coronavirus. There are a multitude of reasons for this decision, primarily the health and safety of all individuals involved in the HERS program. Applicants accepted to the program this summer have been offered a deferment for next summer. The HERS program plans to offer some online programming to those applicants who are applying for graduate school in the next year.

*Learn more about the HERS summer internship program: [http://www.hersinstitute.org/](http://www.hersinstitute.org/)*

**KU News collects COVID-19 responses**

Thanks to our friends over at KU News for their tireless efforts to inform us and the broader community about what KU faculty, students, and staff are doing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Their team has gathered resources for Kansans, professionals, parents, small businesses, patrons, and community members in addition to the latest news and their great new podcast, *When Experts Attack!* Find it all at [news.ku.edu/coronavirus](http://news.ku.edu/coronavirus).

**How funders are responding to COVID-19**

*NSF encourages flexibility and funds non-medical, non-clinical-care research on the coronavirus.*

In guidance released in March 2020, NSF encouraged the submission of RAPID research on the coronavirus: “our ability to better understand the virus and how to effectively respond will be crucial to public health efforts.” Should you have research ideas that can contribute to this goal, get in touch with us about funding for your work through NSF.

In addition, NSF encourages those awardees with conference or travel grants to contact the program officer and
consider alternatives to in-person formats, such as a virtual conference (and nice work, David Slusky, for moving the Kansas Health Economics Conference online on short notice!). Researchers whose project timelines will be delayed because of coronavirus-related disruptions should to file no-cost extensions as early as possible. Check in with Jena Gunter (kujena@ku.edu) if you might need to adjust your project. NSF coronavirus information is available at https://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/coronavirus/

**NIH seeks a broad range of research on COVID-19, offers extra time, and invites questions**
National Institutes of Health offers investigators extra time to submit proposals, with applications for deadlines between March 9 and May 1 accepted through May 1. NIH will also allow extensions to project timelines and due to COVID-related disruptions. In addition, several institutes are seeking research specific to COVID-19, including the Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, and the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities. Learn more: https://grants.nih.gov/policy/natural-disasters/corona-virus.htm

**Russell Sage Foundation shifts its priorities.**
Ahead of its May 21 deadline for letters of inquiry, the Russell Sage Foundation has updated its funding priorities. RSF will now consider highly time-sensitive and timely research that must begin prior to April 2021 and research that “analyzes social, political, economic, or psychological disruptions resulting from the coronavirus crisis that affect social and living conditions in the United States.” Projects should also investigate questions related to RSF’s funding priorities (https://www.russellsage.org/how-to-apply).

**For more information:**
KUCR has collected guidance from federal agencies and posted it at https://research.ku.edu/summary-covid-19-agency-guidance. If you have questions about how agency guidelines affect your research, please contact us.

To find funding for your research idea or to get started on a proposal, contact Nancy Cayton Myers, ncmyers@ku.edu. With questions about changes to an existing sponsored project, contact Jena Gunter, kujena@ku.edu.

**Kansas Economic Policy Conference 2020**
Save the date for the Kansas Economic Policy Conference 2020. We’ll discuss the question “What is the Role of Government in a Crisis?” Hear from policymakers, scholars, and community leaders about disaster preparedness, public health, education, and broadband internet access. The conference will either take place in-person, with an online streaming option, on Thursday, October 22, or remotely with a session each day from Monday, October 19 through Friday, October 23. Check ipsr.ku.edu/conference/kepc2020/ for updates, and track the conference on Twitter with #kepc2020

**IPSR on the media: Donna on Diversity in Central Banks, When Xan Attacks!**
In case you missed it, check out this six-minute interview of Donna Ginther, dean’s professor of economics and director of IPSR, on the gender gap in high-level women economists in central banks and what her research shows about closing the gender gap in economics: https://www.bloomberg.com/news/videos/2020-02-07/bloomberg-equality-diversity-in-economics-central-banks-video

Xan Wedel, senior research engineer and lead, State Data Center, at IPSR, was featured in *When Experts Attack! #7*. This podcast is produced by the KU News Service and presented by Kansas Public Radio. To hear Xan explain just how important the Census is, and how much work she does to clean up data, listen here: https://kansaspublicradio.org/when-experts-attack
Funding opportunity: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation calls for Research on Housing Policies That Promote Equity

We’re big fans of our friends over at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and their new funding call is a great example of why. Due April 29, 2020, RWJF is seeking proposals that evaluate housing policies at the state and local level in cities with populations of 50,000 to 500,000 with regard to their effectiveness in “increasing housing affordability and stability; addressing racial segregation and isolation from opportunity; and increasing access to opportunity-rich neighborhood and place-based resources.” RWJF is interested in learning how these policies “affect racial equity in neighborhood and housing conditions.”
To learn more about this funding call or RWJF, contact Nancy Cayton Myers, ncmyers@ku.edu.

Ask IPSR: New document formats for NSF proposals

Q: Wait a minute. Do I really need to reformat my biosketch and Current & Pending for a summer 2020 NSF proposal? With all this going on?

A: Yes! NSF is requiring that all biographical sketches and Current & Pending support documents for proposals submitted on or after June 1, 2020, follow new formatting guidelines. The good news is that the information NSF requires in these documents is not changing; only the way you provide it is. IPSR pre-award staff can help you move your existing documents into the new formats. Find more information about the new biosketch guidelines and a link to the form at: https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/biosketch.jsp. And find information and the form for the new Current & Pending document format at: https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/cps.jsp

Visualization(s) of the Moment

Perhaps you could use a break from coronavirus-related graphics. In that case, here’s one for you: a visualization that outlines the likelihood that there are planets with detectable life in our galactic neighborhood. Visit https://informationisbeautiful.net/visualizations/the-drake-equation/ to check it out.

Or, if you are looking for more information on the coronavirus and how it’s been spreading in Kansas and Missouri, IPSR has an animated map of the spread on its coronavirus information page. See the animated map: https://mediahub.ku.edu/media/COVID-19+Cases+in+Kansas+%26+Missouri+by+County/1_h1dayk3r and find more on the coronavirus impact on Kansas: https://ipsr.ku.edu/covid19/