Sociology Faculty

Sociology faculty members

- Dr. Sanjeev Acharya
- Dr. Veena Kulkarni
- Mrs. Lavonda Evans
- Mr. Christopher Pitts

Dr. Sanjeev Acharya



Contact Information
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Office: HSS 3073

Associate Professor of Sociology

Faculty Advisor - Alpha Kappa Delta

Education

- Ph.D. in Medical Sociology, University of Alabama at Birmingham, 2020
- M.A. in Sociology, Tribhuvan University, Nepal, 2015
- B.A. in Sociology and English, Tribhuvan University, Nepal, 2010

Teaching Specialties:

- Medical Sociology
- Introduction to Sociology
- Research Methods
- Sociological Theory
- Sociological Literacy
- Sports and Society

Research Interests

- Health Disparities
- Global Health
- SES and Health

- Gender and Health
- Quantitative Methods

Biography

Sanjeev Acharya received his Ph.D. in Medical Sociology from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. His research interests lie in health disparities, global health, socioeconomic status and health, gender and health, and quantitative methods. His research collaborations appear in *The Lancet – EclinicalMedicine, Journal of Racial and Ethnic Disparities, Reproductive Health, and The Journal of Psychology.* He is a member of American Sociological Association, Population Association of America, and Mid-South Sociological Association. He also serves as a peer-reviewer in the *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences.*

Aside from his teaching role, Sanjeev likes to meditate, explore the wonders of nature, learn the mysteries of our universe, and play guitar.

Dr. Veena Kulkarni



Contact Information

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Associate Professor of Sociology

Graduate Program Coordinator

Biography

Veena Kulkarni joined Arkansas State University after completing her Ph.D in Sociology with specialization in Demography and Development from University of Maryland –College Park. Her research interests lie at the intersections of studying social and economic inequalities with the focus on labor market processes and indicators, health and educational outcomes in the context of developing and developed countries. Her work has appeared in peer reviewed journals such as Demography, International Migration Review, International Review of Applied Economics, Journal of Developing Areas, Social Science Research, Sociological Forum, World Development and as book chapters published by the Sage Publication and Oxford University Press. She is presently working on a book manuscript, 'Indian Immigrants in Developed Democracies: A Cross-National Study', to be published by Routledge as part of the 'Routledge Studies of Diasporic Peoples'.

Education

Ph.D., University of Maryland-College Park (Sociology)
M.A., Delhi University (Economics)
Teaching Specialties

Population & Development
Social Demography
Statistics
Social Problems
Research Methods
Research Interests
International Migration
Social Inequalities in Education & Health
Labor Market Processes & Outcomes

Affiliations

American Sociological Association
International Union for the Scientific Study of Population
Population Association of America

Recent Publications

- Kulkarni, Veena. ‘Household Extension and Earnings among Foreign Born Asian and non-Hispanic White Households’, Journal of Family Issues, Forthcoming.
- Rukus, Joseph and Veena Kulkarni. ‘Easier Said than Done: Methodological Challenges in Exploring Prevalence of Mental Health Illness among Rural Jail Inmates in the United States’, International Journal of Rural Criminology, Forthcoming.
  Kulkarni, Veena, Vani S. Kulkarni and Raghav Gaiha. ‘Has Disability Risen among the Elderly in India?’, Economic and Political Weekly, Forthcoming.
- Kulkarni, Veena and Douglas F. Barnes. 2017.‘Education in Rural Peru: Exploring the Role of Household Electrification in School Enrollment’, Journal of Research in Rural Education, 32(10): 1-19.

Mrs. Lavonda Evans



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Instructor

SCA Club Faculty Co-Advisor

Biography

LaVonda Evans grew up in Missouri before moving to Arkansas. Her master's thesis is titled “Beyond the Rhetoric of Homeschool Socialization: An Analysis of the Parental Perspective”, and she is a homeschool advocate. During her time at ASU, she was a Graduate Assistant in the Sociology and Criminology Department, successfully published in the International Journal of Offender Therapy & Comparative Criminology, and continues supporting the field as a peer reviewer. LaVonda recently received her certification as a Certified Administrative Professional from the College of Administrative Professionals. She is a pioneer member of the Staff Senate P.R.O.P.S. subcommittee at A-State. She resides in Jonesboro with her husband Rodney. They have 5 children: Kasidy, Kristopher, Kody, Kanon, and Kelley, and an American Bulldog named Max. LaVonda enjoys blogging, crocheting, and watching true crime documentaries. Labeled the "department mom" by students and faculty, she is delighted to be a part of an amazing department and is proud to call A-State her second home.

Education

A.A.S. Criminal Justice - Black River Technical College - 2010
A.A. General Education - Black River Technical College - 2012
B.S.I.S. Interdisciplinary Studies - Criminology, Sociology, & Health - Arkansas State University - 2015
M.A. Sociology - Arkansas State University - 2019

Credentials

Certified Administrative Professional (APC) - College of Administrative Professionals - 2023

Courses Taught

SOC 1013 - FYE Making Connections - Sociology & Criminology
SOC 2213 - Introduction to Sociology
SOC 3383 - Social Statistics
CRIM 4243 - Social Justice
CRIM 3183 - Institutional Corrections
CRIM 3423 - Serial Homicide

Mr. Christopher Pitts



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Instructor

Biography

With a diverse background that spans continents, industries, and disciplines, Chris brings a wealth of real-world experience to the study of sociology. Born and raised in Southern California, they were at the forefront of major cultural moments, having attended the first-ever Lollapalooza and Vans Warped Tour festivals. Most of his time was spent surfing, skating, playing sports, or enjoying the day at Mission Beach and the Gaslamp District in San Diego, CA. This was followed by serving in the U.S. Marine Corps, His time as a Marine included Helicopter Mechanic, Crew Chief, and Plane Captain, earning the distinction of "Shellback" after crossing the equator. He also spent time as a marksmanship instructor. This provided a foundational understanding of organizational hierarchy, group cohesion, institutional structures, and an understanding of leadership qualities.

His time in the military offered a passport to the world with time spent in Japan, Hawaii, Thailand, Guam, Kuwait, Indonesia, Mexico, and Singapore, Jebel Ali, Dubai, United Arabs Emirate, and Bahrain. Following his military service, Chris embarked on a winding and varied career path that provides a rich tapestry of sociological insight. He has worked as a Criminal Investigator and a Court Clerk, gaining firsthand practical experience within the justice system. Chris also held roles as a department manager for Walmart and as an investigator for J.B. Hunt. This professional journey also includes ten years as a professional wrestler, an auto body technician, and a DJ, offering unique perspectives on subcultures, identity, and performance. Transitioning into academia, Chris has worked as a College Admissions Counselor, a Graduate Assistant, and an Administrative Specialist, understanding the structures and challenges of higher education from the inside, giving him a broader well of knowledge and experience to call upon when assisting

students. This journey through a multitude of social and professional environments has provided him with practical experience and understanding. Academically, Chris holds M.A. degrees in both Sociology and Criminology. His areas of research focus on childhood development, deviant behaviors, and delinquency / criminal behavior.

Education

A.A.S. Criminal Justice - Arkansas State University Newport - 2011
A.A.S. Applied Science - Arkansas State University - 2011
B.A. Sociology - Arkansas State University - 2022
B.A. Criminology - Arkansas State University - 2022
M.A. Sociology - Arkansas State University - 2024
M.A. Criminology - Arkansas State University - 2025

Courses Taught

SOC 2213 - Introduction to Sociology