

Social Inequality, Health & Policy Strand Descriptions

Social Inequality

Students in the Social Inequality strand study social stratification and the inequalities in socioeconomic status among various groups in a society. This disparate socioeconomic status impacts an individual's opportunities and life circumstances related to education, health, and wealth, among other factors. Examples of student work in this strand include:

- Research on minority demographics and education in Texas.
- Research on housing quality and home ownership in immigrant communities.
- Research on informal settlement communities in Senegal to explore the health, sanitation, and environmental effects of these settlements on the local people.
- Research at UT's Population Research Center through the Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) program.

Public Health

The Public Health strand addresses the health of a community or society, as opposed to the health of an individual. Persons who work in or study public health are concerned with health policy, health promotion, and disease prevention. Public Health can be closely connected with social inequality because populations in a lower social status are at higher risk for poor health and certain diseases. Examples of student work in this strand include:

- Research on early childhood development opportunities for children from various U.S. communities.
- Research on rising rate of alcoholism in Russia since the collapse of the Soviet Union.
- Internships with the Texas Department of State Health Services.
- Research on the rates of mammograms among different ethnic groups in the U.S.

Family & Fertility

The Family and Fertility strand focuses on patterns of union formation, household and family composition, and fertility behavior including access to contraception and abortion, fertility timing including teen pregnancy, and levels of fertility. Family- and fertility-related behaviors are closely connected to women's status, the status of children, and socioeconomic status. It also matters to the economic development and national security of a place. For example, who marries whom and who stays married has strong implications for growing inequality among American children. At the same time, persistent levels of high fertility in parts of the global South is tied to stagnated development and civil unrest just as persistent levels of very low fertility in parts of Europe and East Asian has implications for each region's economic future. Examples of student work in this strand include:

- Research on changes in fertility occurring among specific demographic groups in the U.S.
- Research on the impact of divorce on children and families.
- Persistently low fertility and population aging in Japan.

- Adolescent romance and sex.

Migration & Diaspora

The Migration and Diaspora strand explores the causes and consequences of population movement across national borders, considering such topics as international migration, immigration policies, internally displaced persons, and refugees. Examples of student work in this strand include:

- Research on how zoning and land-use regulations contribute to the creation of exclusionary spaces in the urban landscape.
- Impact of Spanish family law on various immigrant populations in Spain.