

A Note from the Chair

We have another exciting semester ahead of us in The Department of Latin American and Women's Studies. With a number of co-curricular events and faculty collaborations with the Cross Cultural Centers, you're sure to find plenty of chances to connect what you learn in the classroom to a range of pressing social questions. From Roberta Villalón's talk "Violence against Latina Immigrants" to Ruth Feldstein's look at how Black women entertainers shaped the Civil Rights Movement, we hope you will join us in our ongoing conversations about working for a more just and inclusive future.

In Women's Studies, we have the good fortune of welcoming more new faculty to our program. Loreen Wolfer (Sociology), Kim Pavlick (Communication), and Danielle Arigo (Psychology) join us in our efforts to offer our students the broadest possible range of courses. Each time we expand our course offerings, we are reminded of how feminist and gender studies can complement a range of disciplinary practices. I hope you will be in touch to learn more about the courses and experiences on offer soon!

Applying the knowledge we make together to the tough questions we face today is what our programs are all about, whether we're following the media coverage of a purported generation gap among Democratic women or considering the politics of Spanish language and Latin@ identity that became visible on a national stage when Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz clashed in a recent Republican debate. Which connections will be important to you as you make your way on campus and in your communities? We hope you will let us be a part of the conversation, and encourage you to talk to LA/W/S faculty as you prepare to register for Fall classes, plan for study abroad and internships, and consider post-graduate opportunities.

-----Jamie H. Trnka, Director of Women's Studies and Chair of LA/W/S

A NOTE FROM THE LAS PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Happy Spring 2016 semester! I hope you all had a restful and happy holiday season and Intersession Break.

With the start of the new calendar year of 2016 comes the realization that we are in a presidential election year. Although there are many economic, political, and social issues for our presidential candidates to address this year during their campaigns, one of the most significant issues where social justice and basic human safety are at stake is the issue of immigration/migration, and this topic is always an important one for those of us who engage in Latin American and Latino/a Studies and for those of us from this area of the world or who can trace our heritage to this region.

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A NOTE FROM THE LAS PROGRAM DIRECTOR

(con't from p. 1) Additionally, as we find ourselves in a Catholic and Jesuit University, we can be compelled especially to view the topic of immigration/migration within the context of Catholic Social Teaching, which is doctrine developed by the Catholic Church that attempts to honor human dignity and solidarity by balancing concern for society at large, inclusive of the weakest and poorest amongst us, with consideration of human liberty. Indeed, Catholic Social Teaching can serve the cause of social justice by productively and humanely engaging with concerns about how the state manages the economic issues of wealth and poverty.

For all of these reasons, we have a good deal of programming on the issue of immigration and migration this semester. Our Latin American

Studies Film Festival this semester is focused on the theme of migrants' stories. The films and dates are as follows:

The Sleep-Dealer (USA/Mexico, 2008)

February 24, 2016

The Golden Dream (Mexico, 2013)

March 15, 2016

La Batalla de los Invisibles (Mexico, 2010)

April 20, 2016

The location and time for all of these movies are the same: **Brennan Hall 228 at 7pm.**

What is particularly interesting about this selection of films is that each one represents a distinct genre's engagement with immigration/migration issues: *The Sleep-Dealer* is a science-fiction film; *The Golden Dream* is a drama; and *La Batalla de los Invisibles* is a documentary.

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UPCOMING LAS FILMS

Migrants' Stories

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February 24

The Golden Dream (México,
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La Batalla de los Invisibles
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April 20

The location and time for all of
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Hall 228 at 7 pm.

Also, we will have Roberta Villalón, an Associate Professor of Sociology and Chair of the Department of Sociology at St. John's University, visit our campus this semester. Her work addresses three main areas: collective memory in Latin American research, transnational activist research, and the intersections of domestic violence, immigration policies, and the Latina population of the United States. Villalón's book, *Violence Against Latina Immigrants: Citizenship, Inequality, and Community*, was published in 2010 by New York University Press. Her public lecture entitled, "Violence against Latina Immigrants: Persistent Inequalities & Change" will take place on April 14, 2016, from 5:30-6:30pm, at LSC 133.

As someone who volunteered for two years at a nonprofit group that offered free legal services to immigrant victims of violence, Roberta Villalón will detail how many immigrant women are particularly vulnerable to abuse, as they are caught between violent partners, the bureaucratic complications, and the unequal structure of the US Immigration system. Her activist research of Latina survivors of partner abuse explores the complexities at the intersection of immigration, citizenship, and violence, and shows how inequality is perpetuated and can be challenged to further justice.

A small reception will follow the talk. Sponsors of this event include the Office of Equity & Diversity, the Department of Latin American & Women Studies, the Department of Sociology, Criminal Justice, and Criminology, and Education for Justice. We hope to see many University community members at her lecture, and that all of these events serve to strengthen and diversify this community's understanding of the issues of immigration and migration.

Lastly, as I did in the Fall 2015 semester, I would invite any interested party reading this newsletter to come and talk to me about the Latin American Studies Program, our events for this semester, or events you would like to see in the future. We would love to hear what you are thinking about in terms of our Program and what you would like to see in the future. My office is located in the McDade Center for Literary and Performing Arts, CLP 203, and I will be holding office hours this semester from 4:00-6:00pm on Mondays and Wednesdays. My email is susan.mendez@scranton.edu and my extension is x4317. Please contact me or another professor in the Latin American Studies Program if you have questions.

Have a great semester everyone!
~susan c. méndez



An Evening with Virginia Grise

On November 11, 2015, writer, performer, and teacher, Virginia Grise visited the University of Scranton campus for a reading of excerpts from her plays and other works. By 5:30 pm that Wednesday evening, the Studio Theatre of the McDade Center for Literary and Performing Arts was filled nearly to its capacity with students and faculty members awaiting the start of Grise's performative reading. She shared portions of her published and unpublished works, including *blu* and *Siempre Norteadá*, followed by excerpts from a few of her new and upcoming projects.

Virginia Grise's career is one of impressive distinction, making her visit to the University of Scranton campus all the more exciting for students and faculty members alike. Grise earned her B.A. in History and Spanish Language at The University of Texas at Austin in 1998. She then went on to receive an MFA in Writing for Performance in 2009, from the California Institute of the Arts. Throughout her career, Grise has earned many prestigious awards and honors such as: The Whiting Writers Award, the Loft Literary Center Spoken Word Immersion Fellowship, the Pregones Theatre's Asuncion Queer Playwriting Award, and the Women's Project Theater's Playwrights Lab. She was also the 2010 recipient of the Yale Drama Series Award for her play, *blu*, which was followed by Yale University Press's publication of *blu*.

In her dramatic reading of her works, she embodied her characters in a single voice, providing little indication of different characters, creating an intentional effect that she referred to as "disorientating." After concluding the reading segment of the evening, Grise opened the floor to the audience to ask any follow up questions about her work as well as her personal career as a writer. The questions ranged from the sources of inspiration for many of her works to how location factors into her writing style and portrayal of characters as she asserted her stories had a more regional pull in the places that she envisions them, namely San Antonio, TX and Los Angeles, CA. Grise offered detailed and personal answers to each question from the audience, producing a more conversational atmosphere within the room. She spoke to the intentions and inspirations of her work, commenting on the focus on marginalized people, specifically the Latino/a and Latin American communities; Grise also connected her works to the more general conditions of oppression and confinement.

Virginia Grise's visit provided insight into the nature and style of her own work as well as an informative overview of the career and projects of a working artist and writer. She shared not only her art, through her engaging reading of her works, but also shared candid responses to questions about the life and work of a contemporary artist.

-Jade C. Williams

Efforts Made to Explain the Continuing Refugee Crisis

Over the course of the Fall 2015 semester, the conflict in Syria and its impact on the people who lived there was a topic of several discussions and events here at the University of Scranton. One of these events was cosponsored by the Latin American Studies Program and facilitated by Dr. Mike Allison, Chair of the Political Science Department and Coordinator of Education for Justice. The topic of the day was the difference between Internally Displaced Persons, or IDPs, refugees, migrants, and those seeking asylum; however, discussion was free-flowing. People are fleeing violence not only in the Middle East, but also around the globe. In the case of the United States, many are relocating from Latin America, in an attempt to escape poverty, violence, and corruption. Sixty-four million people have been forced to leave their homes for multiple reasons, but many because of violence, and this is a number that has doubled in the last decade. At the time of the talk, Syria and Iraq were the top two nations from which refugees originated, followed by South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, and Colombia.

One major issue is the question of how to deal with minors, who are attempting to cross the border or have made it to the United States and are found to still be living here without the proper documentation. In the last several years, there have been approximately 100,000 unaccompanied minors apprehended or who have turned themselves in while attempting to make it to the relative safety of the United States. As Dr. Allison has written for *Al-Jazeera*, the immigration system is not equipped to handle such a high volume of people entering the United States and therefore the United States is not always dealing with the crisis in a humanitarian manner, or one in which the best interests of a minor are taken into consideration. For example, if a person under the age of 18 is

caught, then they are supposed to be viewed as potential victims of human trafficking and treated accordingly. This is not the case if the minor is from Canada or México. There is an effort being made, however, to connect children with family once they have crossed the border, regardless of the family member's legal status.

In addition, prisons have been filling beds with migrants who have been caught and sentenced to some period of incarceration in the United States. After they have served their sentence, these people are then deported, usually back to Central America. As a result of concerns over the treatment of these migrants who have been imprisoned, the use of ankle monitors has been implemented. In addition, *coyotes*, or people who have been hired by migrants to assist them in reaching the United States, have begun to offer multiple attempts to reach the United States if they fail the first time.

Throughout the coming year, more events will be held to further the theme of literacy in regard to people from Central and South America, as well as México and the Caribbean. Dr. Susan Méndez led one of these discussions, which was based on the differences in terminology used to describe people from Latin America; labels of identity discussed included Latina/o, Hispanic, Tejano/a, and others. In addition, the Department of LAWS is co-sponsoring speaker Roberta Vilalón, Ph.D., who will detail her work with immigrants who were victims of domestic violence. Through these events, the University of Scranton community is on its way to becoming more aware of some of the issues facing people who have migrated to the United States.

-Kaelyn Jacques

Supporting Migrants Through the Asylum Process

Precarious economic and social conditions have forced hundreds of thousands of people from Central America's Northern Triangle to flee their homes in recent years. The plight of the people of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala was brought home to the U.S. public during 2014's "unaccompanied minors crisis," when thousands of children and families voluntarily turned themselves in to the U.S. Border Patrol. While forewarned, the U.S. was unprepared wholly to care for this vulnerable population. The U.S. did not have enough beds, doctors, and social workers. In many ways, the U.S. also made life difficult for those who made it to the border so as to deter future migrants from making the same trip. Instead of dedicating additional emergency resources to tend to the needs of these people, the U.S. sought to beef up security along its southern border and even further south, Mexico's border with Guatemala.

In the Latin American courses that I teach, we often study present day conditions in Central America. Poverty and inequality led to civil wars in Guatemala and El Salvador during the second half of the twentieth century. In many ways, peace agreements to end the wars in El Salvador (1992) and Guatemala (1996) resolved the political violence but did little to address the social and economic conditions that led to the outbreaks of the conflicts in the first place. El Salvador's poverty rate is the best among the three at approximately 35%; Guatemala (55%) and Honduras (66%) score notably worse. Life is extremely difficult and made even worse by high levels of inequality.

However, poor economic conditions are nothing new and is not the only driver of migration. For the most part, the peace agreements ended the political violence. However, that insecurity has been replaced by escalating violence carried out by street gangs, organized crime, and drug trafficking organizations. El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala are among the three most violent countries in the world not at war in the traditional sense of the term. The violence has led many of those who have made it to the United States to apply for asylum. They seek asylum because they are escaping persecution rather than searching for economic opportunities.

I have volunteered as an expert witness on asylum cases from El Salvador. In my capacity as an expert witness, I provide immigration authorities with background on the country's conditions and weigh in on whether the experience of persecution that the asylee presents in his or her testimony is consistent with my understanding of life in the country. During the spring semester, Political Science and History double major Jay Cuny and I worked with law students from Georgetown University to win asylum for a young man who fled gang violence. Political Science major and Latin American Studies and Women's Studies concentrator Kaelyn Jacques and I are currently helping a man from Guatemala pursue asylum based upon political persecution. Finally, students in this year's Central America course will be debating an actual asylum case that I worked on last year.

-Michael E. Allison



A Thank–You to Dr. Penyak

To those in the History Department, Dr. Lee Penyak is a familiar face, especially if students have an interest in Latin America. What some do not know, perhaps, is that one of the courses that Dr. Penyak teaches is a Women's Studies course, *Gender and Family in Latin America* (HIST 213). As a student who has had the pleasure of being in several of Dr. Penyak's classes, as well as having both a Women's Studies and a Latin American Studies Concentration, this class was the perfect addition to my coursework.

Gender and Family in Latin America consisted of a diverse array of reading materials, including works on the *machista* culture, specifically in México, the existence of a group of individuals called travestis in Brazil, and the concept of motherhood in Latin America. When this class was last offered, in Spring 2015, I had just arrived back from an Intersession trip to México, and this course was especially valuable because it was easy to see some of the concepts that we had experienced while abroad be described and analyzed. One example is the role of women in a household, and motherhood, particularly in México. The students on the trip were all placed with host families, and the role of the mothers was described almost perfectly in the pieces that Dr. Penyak used in this class.

Personally, one of the most interesting portions of the class was discussing machismo, and its continuing effects on modern Latin American culture, as well as the continuing effects that the concept of masculinity has had on women and motherhood. As the semester continued, it became more and more clear that social class, ethnic group, religion, geography, and time period had a significant impact on how men and women interacted in their various societies. Throughout the course, we studied the evolving concept of womanhood and motherhood in various cultures, including indigenous and African societies.

One of the highlights of the semester was when Dr. Penyak brought in some of his personal collection of primary documents, so that the students were able to see how they are catalogued, and experience the challenges of using primary sources in academia. As a class, we discovered that one of the main difficulties was the handwriting, because the documents were written several centuries ago.

Dr. Penyak teaches a variety of other classes, including *Colonial Latin America*, *Modern Latin America*, and *The African Experience in Latin America, 1500-1900*. Another student who has taken several of these classes, Matt Horn, says that, "Dr. Penyak has been able to infuse so much [in his classes] about the struggles suffered and successes made by women throughout the past 400 years in Latin America, educating myself and many others about a often-overlooked subject in history." Although Dr. Penyak is going on a leave of absence from the University, the students who have been enrolled in his classes will appreciate certainly the materials learned for years to come.

-Kaelyn Jacques



Uniting Theory and Practice in Student Life

My first Women's Studies course was *Feminism and Social Change* (Fall 2013). At first, I felt out of place, even though I had read the material and listened to discussions. I was unsure how to contribute. I realized that I had never truly thought about how feminist issues shape our society; I never knew these issues existed and didn't realize how what I say or think were related to society at large. I was excited by the "ah-ha!" moments that kept occurring during class, and decided to make two changes: get involved in the Jane Kopas Women's Center and adopt a Women's Studies concentration. From that moment, I knew my life would change for the better.

With every Women's Studies class I took, I felt more connected to social justice; it became more than just a phrase. These words meant something to me now, and I intended to do everything I could to become a woman for and with others and to make something of my education—and myself. Then I became involved with the *Take Back the Night* rally as part of my *Counseling Girls and Women* course. When I started to relate the event to my coursework, then a woman's standpoint, I decided to volunteer. That experience as volunteer and participant changed me: I learned how important it is to educate people on issues that we focus on in the

JKWC and in WS courses. People were experiencing violence on our campus, and I needed to do more.

I applied for a position among the amazing Jane Kopas Women's Center staff because I felt called to give back and do something for the university community related to my passion for social justice. I got the job, and put the knowledge from my WS classes and from the "ah-ha!" moments I was so fond of to work. My *Feminism and Social Change* class taught me about the history of feminism and related social movements, as well as how to create a basis for social change on my own; *Counseling Girls and Women* connected my passion with my major; *Women, Authority and Power*, another WS course, taught me about political aspects of feminism as well as ways we might overcome issues such as the glass ceiling and the wage gap. I feel grateful that we have Women's Studies coursework and opportunities to work with the JKWC because together they have helped me to realize my true potential as an individual and advocate, as well as my true self.

--Emily Toledo, Women's Studies '16



JKWC Staff Members

Photo courtesy of Justine Johnson

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT ON DANIELLE ARIGO

Faculty Spotlight:

Dr. Danielle Arigo, Assistant Professor of Psychology and a licensed psychologist, specializes in the interdisciplinary field of health psychology and behavioral medicine. She received her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Syracuse University in 2012; she completed a clinical internship at the Syracuse VA Medical Center and a Postdoctoral Research Fellowship at Drexel University. She has published 22 peer-reviewed articles and five book chapters, and serves as a regular manuscript reviewer for several top journals in the field of behavioral medicine. Dr. Arigo is a Scholar for the 2015-2016 PRIDE-Cardiovascular Disease Program, sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute), which promotes diversity among researchers in cardiovascular disease.



...She has designed and delivered four programs to improve the effectiveness of physical activity promotion efforts for women.

Dr. Arigo's work – particularly research in cardiovascular disease prevention – focuses on gender disparities in healthcare and health behaviors. For example, Dr. Arigo has identified unique psychosocial risk factors for disordered eating behavior among college women, including upward social comparison and hedonic hunger. Her research and clinical observation revealed unique barriers to physical activity for women, including lack of social support. In response, she has designed and delivered four programs to improve the effectiveness of physical activity promotion efforts for women. These programs emphasize social and digital intervention methods, including the social features of wearable technologies such as FitBit and MyFitnessPal.

With University of Scranton students and colleagues from around the NEPA region, Dr. Arigo investigates additional women's health topics such as obesity treatment within social networks, the utility of peer support specialists in Veterans' primary medical care, and the development of a mobile health application to promote weight loss after pregnancy. She also reviews grant proposals for the NEPA affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Foundation, which provides funding for breast cancer screening and survivorship support programs.

Dr. Arigo joined the Women's Studies faculty in the fall of 2015. She teaches *Abnormal Psychology*, *Health Psychology*, and *Personality and Individual Differences*; each of these courses emphasize gender differences in psychological and physical processes, as well as the influence of traditional gendered perspectives of cognition and health. Currently, students can receive Women's Studies credit for *Health Psychology* (PSYC 228), which is offered each spring semester. This course applies psychological principles to physical health and well-being, with an emphasis on gender and income disparities in healthcare. This course received a 2014 Teaching Enhancement Grant to support the use of technology such as FitBit in course-related research. You can follow the course and the Clinical Health Psychology Research Team @UofSHealthPsych on Twitter.

-Danielle Arigo

The University to Screen *He Named Me Malala* in Celebration of International Women's Day

To celebrate March 8 International Women's Day and Women's History Month, the Asian Studies Program—in partnership with LA/W/S, Education for Justice, and the Cross Cultural Centers—will screen *He Named Me Malala*. The film offers an intimate portrait of the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Malala Yousafzai, who was wounded severely when Taliban gunmen opened fire on her school bus in Pakistan. Then fifteen, Malala, who had been targeted for speaking out on behalf of girls' education, was shot in the head, sparking international media outrage. She survived miraculously. An educational activist in Pakistan, Yousafzai has since emerged as a leading campaigner for the rights of children and for girls' education globally. In 2014, she became the youngest-ever Nobel Peace Prize Laureate.

The screening will take place on March 8 (Tuesday) at 7 pm, DeNaples Center, Room 401 (The Ann and Leo Moskovitz Theater) and will be followed by a panel discussion led by two expert speakers, Dr. Riaz Hussain of the University of Scranton and Dr. Annina Mirza of Keystone College.

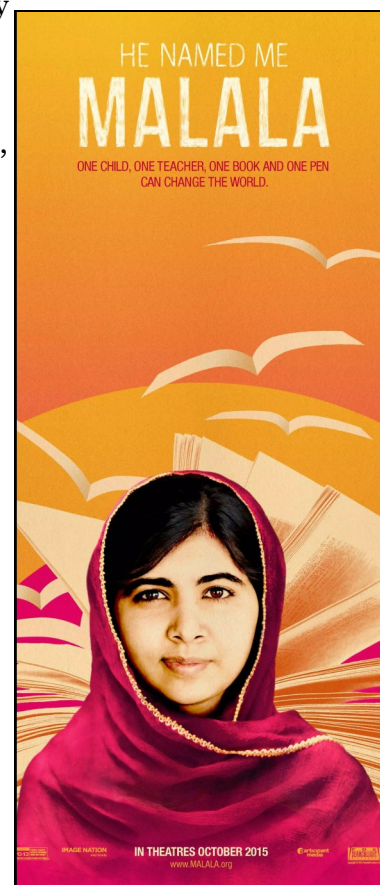
Dr. Hussain is an Associate Professor of Finance at The University of Scranton. As Imam of the Campus Mosque, Dr. Hussain is the spiritual leader of about 150 families in Lackawanna and Luzerne counties, including many of the University's international students. Dr. Mirza is an instructor at Keystone College. She was born and raised in Pakistan and now lives in Clarks Summit.

A reception will follow. Audiences will also learn about ways they can support the initiatives of the Malala Fund for girls' education and the rights of children worldwide.

The event is the first of the three-part film series, *Women in Asia: Traditions, Transformation, and Modernization*. The other two films are scheduled for March 29, 7 PM, a film screening of *Taste of Life* (2015) and Q & A with the award-winning director Yu-Shan Huang. On April 19, 7 PM, a screening of *Seeking Asian Females*, a 2012 PBS award-winning documentary by Debbie Lum, will be held. The screening will be followed by a discussion led by Dr. Meghan Ashlin Rich (Sociology and Women's Studies), an expert on race and ethnic relations and sociology of globalization.

For more information, contact Ann A. Pang-White, Director of Asian Studies, at ann.pang-white@scranton.edu or (570) 941-7643.

-Ann A. Pang-White



Violence against Latina Immigrants: Persistent Inequalities & Change

Caught between violent partners, the bureaucratic complications and the unequal structure of the U.S. Immigration system, many immigrant women are particularly vulnerable to abuse. For two years, Roberta Villalón volunteered at a nonprofit group that offered free legal services to immigrant victims of violence. Her activist research of Latina survivors of partner abuse explores the complexities at the intersection of immigration, citizenship, and violence, and shows how inequality is perpetuated and can be challenged to further justice.



Photo courtesy of <http://stjohns.academia.edu/RobertaVillalon>

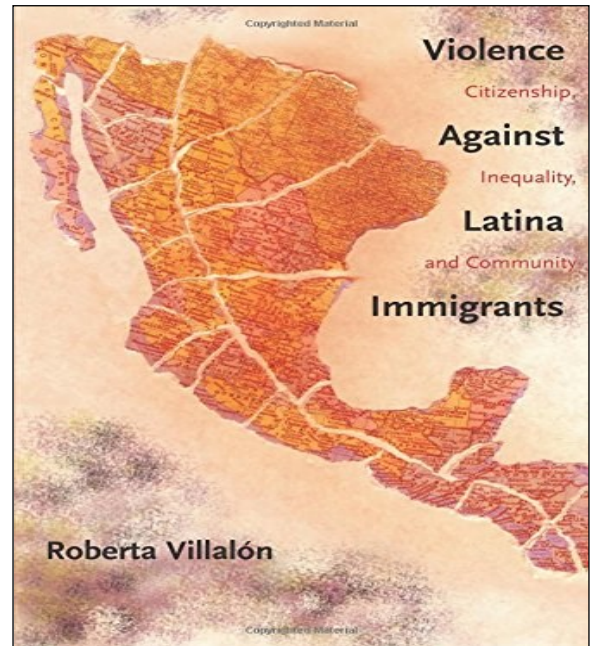


Photo courtesy of Amazon.com

April 14, 2016
Loyola Science Center 133
5:30 – 6:30 pm

Small Reception to follow talk

Sponsors for this event include the Office of Equity & Diversity, the Department of Latin American and Women's Studies, the Department of Sociology, Criminal Justice, and Criminology, and Education for Justice.

Please contact susan.mendez@scranton.edu for more information about this event.