

Center for Social and Economic Policy

[Home](#) | [Contact Information](#) | [Major Projects](#) | [Other Links](#)

Promoting Research on Policy Issues

The Center for Social and Economic Policy (CSEP) is an academic research unit housed under the University of California at Riverside's Center for Social and Behavioral Sciences Research. Its mission is to promote research by UC Riverside faculty and graduate students on all aspects of social and economic policy.

CSEP welcomes all methodological approaches, but it places special emphasis on quantitative analysis as well as comparative or historical perspectives.

Above all, the Center seeks to establish an atmosphere of excitement, involvement, and collegiality surrounding policy research at UCR. It does this by sponsoring academic focus groups and lecture series on policy-related research topics, by elevating the prominence of ongoing research at UCR through various working-paper releases, and, above all, by encouraging joint projects among UCR researchers, including those that involve graduate students.

Such an atmosphere will be an asset in UCR's efforts to recruit and retain first-class researchers and students in the social sciences and humanities.

Responding to a Changing Funding Environment

One of CSEP's main purposes is to increase UC Riverside's competitiveness in the quest for federal, state, and private social science research money. Such funding sources have increasingly favored policy-oriented, multi-disciplinary "team" research projects.

CSEP facilitates the efforts of UC Riverside researchers to obtain such funding in several ways:

- Promoting knowledge among faculty and graduate students about pertinent extramural funding sources.
 - Assisting researchers with grant applications.
 - Administering grants that researchers earn.
 - Fostering academic networking around likely topics of policy research -- for example, the UCR Immigration Group and an initiative to create a similar group focused on topics in higher education.
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Actively Engaging in Policy Research

CSEP staff members are actively engaged in several policy-related research projects. The most prominent is an effort to create a millennial edition of *Historical Statistics of the United States*. This project is supported by three separate National Science Foundation grants, plus a grant from the Sloan Foundation, and involves the work of over 100 scholars across the United States. The result will be both a multi-volume reference work published by Cambridge University Press and an electronic database of over 80,000 time series covering a broad range of social, political, and

economic topics.

CSEP staff members have launched several other policy research projects, some of them supported by outside funding: temporary workers and U.S. immigration policy; a cohort-based policy analysis focusing particularly on educational and retirement issues; U.S. labor force participation; and twentieth-century state fiscal policy.

The center's staff is also available to assist researchers in the use of several quantitative data sources likely to be valuable to policy researchers, such as the Current Population Survey (CPS) and the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).

[Home](#) | [Contact Information](#) | [Major Projects](#) | [Other Links](#)