

## **ISCE-GII 2013 Research Support Program**

### **Summaries of Projects Selected for Funding**

#### ***Security, Inequality and Gender in El Salvador, Guatemala and Peru***

Ilja A. Luciak, Professor, Department of Political Science, Nick Copeland, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, and Zac Zimmer, Assistant Professor, Foreign Languages and Literatures

Over the past decade, women's participation in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction has received much-deserved attention. The introduction of a gender perspective at the international, regional and national level has led to a better understanding and appreciation of women's participation in armed conflict and subsequent peace negotiations, as well as their central role in the reconstruction of post-conflict societies. Yet women's experiences and agency are rarely considered in debates surrounding the problems of insecurity plaguing post-conflict democracies. This project will contribute to our understanding of the contributions women make in post-conflict environments. Field research during the Salvadoran presidential election process of February and March 2014 will permit the PI to explore the crucial intersections between security, inequality and gender by examining the electoral platforms and campaign discourses of the main political parties competing in the Salvadoran electoral process. This is part of a wider project involving three case studies.

#### ***Building a common language around the dynamic resilience of coastal communities***

Christopher Zobel, Professor, Department of Business Information Technology; Yang Zhang, Assistant Professor, and Margaret Cowell, Assistant Professor, Department of Urban Affairs and Planning; C. Guney Olgun, Research Assistant Professor, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering; Robert Weiss, Assistant Professor, Department of Geosciences; Mohsen Ghafory-Ashtiany, Professor, International Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Seismology

Disasters are multi-dimensional, deeply interwoven events that cross geographic, political, social, and cultural boundaries to affect millions of people worldwide. Although researchers in many different disciplines are actively working on reducing disaster impacts and improving the effectiveness of disaster recovery, they tend to view disasters from their own specific disciplinary perspective. There is no common language, no common set of objectives, no common understanding, and no common vision for addressing disaster risk and achieving resilience. All of these are crucial, however, for developing a better transdisciplinary understanding of the full complexity of disaster resilience, especially the dynamic interplay between risk drivers, mitigation measures, and recovery policies. This project proposes to establish a holistic and integrated characterization of disaster resilience that aims at closing the gaps between disciplines, and therefore to provide a common language through which new and innovative perspectives develop to find solutions to the growing impacts of disaster events. The project team will leverage the discipline-specific expertise of each team member by exploring the contrasts between the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami and Superstorm Sandy

in 2012, and will use this to support their development of a more transdisciplinary approach to characterizing coastal community resilience.

***Multilateral Greenhouse Gas Reduction Policies Based on Shared Successes: Adoption of Residential Energy Efficient Technologies in the United States and the European Union***

Bradford Mills, Professor, Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, Joachim Schleich, Professor, Grenoble Ecole de Management, France, and Anthony Murray, Economist, Economic Research Service, USDA

In both the EU and the USA a number of encouraging efforts have been undertaken to limit greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, however bilateral and multilateral agreements on GHG reductions have proved elusive. This research will use household datasets from both regions to provide a comparative analysis of EU and USA residential energy use policies for home lighting and major appliances that are widely considered to have been effective in reducing household energy use. Particular emphasis will be placed on understanding the roles that informative policies, focused on providing consumers with information on energy savings, and regulatory policies have played in energy efficient residential lighting and major appliance diffusion. The contributions of country differences in household characteristics and environmental preferences to observed differences in residential energy saving technology diffusion will also be identified in the empirical analysis. Study results will then be distilled into an energy policy oriented article that can be used to inform the design of multilateral agreements that balance country-specific preferences and conditions with the need for common GHG reduction targets.

***The Political Economy of Pension Finance in Latin America***

Giselle Datz, Associate Professor, School of Public and International Affairs, National Capital Region

Although Latin American pension funds have grown significantly as a result of pension reforms in the 1990s, they have received very limited attention as crucial players in domestic and international financial markets. This project aims to elucidate new developments in pension finance in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Mexico from the early 1990s to present. The focus is on pension reform and regulations that shape the investment strategies of pension funds. In order to capture regional diversity, a new typology is suggested that departs from the oft-mentioned Anglo-American notion of “pension fund capitalism”. It further specifies pension finance as also revealing dynamics best described as pension fund developmentalism (where the public sector has influence over pension funds’ investment strategies, and private-public institutional arrangements are blurred despite some degree of economic liberalization) and statism (where the state regains control over mandatory pension savings, previously privatized). The typology is not only aimed at capturing more empirical nuance in the Latin American cases studies analyzed here, but it can also serve as reference for cross regional analyses of these often neglected actors, on whose financial performance lies the sustainability of both publicly and privately managed capitalization plans.