

Laura Nichols

Curriculum Vitae

Office Address:

Department of Sociology, 500 El Camino Real, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA 95053-0261; 408-551-713 (office), LNichols@scu.edu Publications on [Scholar Commons](#)

EDUCATION

Ph.D. August 1995-August 2000. *Sociology*. The University of Akron, Akron, OH.

M.A. January 1994-August 1995. *Sociology*. Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI.

B.S. June 1990. *Sociology; Communication Minor*. Santa Clara University, CA.

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

-*Professor* (2021-Present), Santa Clara University

-*Associate Professor* (2006-2021), Santa Clara University.

-*Assistant Professor* (2000-2006), Santa Clara University.

Courses Taught: Introduction to Research Methods & Design; (The Educated) Self, Community, and Society; Social Stratification; Applied Sociology; Introduction to Participatory Action Research (PAR); PAR Experience; Social Change; Principles of Sociology; Internship; Research Practicum; Qualitative Sociology; Sociology of Education; Sociology of Family

BOOKS

Nichols, Laura. 2020, January. *The Journey Before Us: First-Generation Pathways from Middle School to College*. New York: Rutgers University Press.

Jones, Terry-Ann and Laura Nichols (Eds.). 2017. *Undocumented and In College: Students and Institutions in a Climate of National Hostility*. Bronx, NY: Fordham University Press.

ARTICLES and CHAPTERS

Nichols, Laura. 2023. "What Students? Which Mission?" Pp. 21-46 in Prusak & Reed-Bouley (Eds.). *Catholic Higher Education and Catholic Social Thought*. Paulist Press.

Nichols, Laura. 2019. "Addressing Exclusion in Organizations: Social Desire Paths and Undocumented Students Attending College." *Social Problems* spz021, <https://doi.org/10.1093/socpro/spz021>

Fernández, Jesica Siham, *Alma R. Orozco, Patricia Rodriguez, Irene E. Cermeño, and Laura Nichols. 2019. "Madres Emprendedoras, Entrepreneurial Mothers: Reflections from a Community-based Participatory Action Research Course with Mexican Immigrant Madres in the Silicon Valley." *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*.

Nichols, Laura and Maria Guzmán. 2017. "Getting, Staying, and Being in College: The Experiences of Students." Pp. 104-133 in Jones and Nichols (Eds.) *Undocumented and In*

College. New York, NY: Fordham University Press.

- Nichols, Laura. 2017. "Public Sociology." *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociology: Volume 2 Specialty and Interdisciplinary Studies*. Pp. 313-321 K. O. Korgen (Ed.). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press. (Invited)
- Nichols, Laura. 2017. "The Role of Catholic Schools in Reducing Educational and Economic Inequality." *Integritas* 9(4):1-25.
- Dumais, Susan A. and Laura Nichols. 2016. "The Effect of Mothers' Educational Credentials on Children's Outcomes: Does Being a First-Generation or Continuing-Generation College Graduate Matter?" *Research in the Sociology of Education* 19: 91-121.
- Nichols Laura and Ángel Islas. 2016. "Pushing and Pulling Emerging Adults through College: College Generational Status and the Influence of Parents and Others in the First Year." *Journal of Adolescent Research* 31(1): 59-95.
- Nichols, Laura. 2015, Fall. "Response to Daniel K. Finn." *Integritas* 6.2: 19-23.
- Nichols, Laura. 2014. "Social Desire Paths: A New Theoretical Concept to Increase the Usability of Social Science Research in Society." *Theory and Society* 43(6): 647-665.
- Nichols, Laura. 2014. "Social Desire Paths: An Applied Sociology of Interests." *Social Currents* 1(2): 166-172.
- Nichols, Laura, Fernando Cázares, and Angelica Rodriguez*. 2012. "Educating about Homelessness: A University-City Government Research Partnership". In P. Nyden, L. Hossfeld, and G. Nyden (Eds.) *Public Sociology: Research, Action, and Change*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. (Invited)
- Nichols, Laura and Fernando Cázares. 2011. "Homelessness and the Mobile Shelter System: Public Transportation as Shelter." *Journal of Social Policy* 40 (2): 333-350.
- Nichols, Laura, Fernando Cázares, and Angelica Rodriguez.* 2011. "University-Community Partnerships: Addressing Policy Dilemmas with Community Based Research." In C. Cress and D. Donahue (Eds.) *Democratic Dilemmas of Teaching Service-Learning: Curricular Strategies for Success*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Nichols, Laura. 2010. "Using Sociology for College Success." In K. O. Korgen and J. M. White, *Sociologists in Action*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. (Invited)
- Feltey, Kathryn and Laura Nichols. 2008. "Homeless Women with Children in Shelters: The Institutionalization of Family Life." R. McNamara (Ed.) *Homelessness in America*. Vol. 1. Praeger Publishers.
- Ramos-Sánchez, Lucila and Laura Nichols. 2007. "Self-Efficacy of First-Generation College Students and the Relationship to Academic Performance and College

- Adjustment.” *Journal of College Counseling*. 10(1): 6-19.
- Nichols, Laura, Cheryl Elman, and Kathryn M. Feltey. 2006. “The Economic Resource Receipt of New Mothers.” *Journal of Family Issues* 27(8).
- Nichols, Laura, *Joshua Berry, and *Demetra Kalogrides. 2004. “Hop on the Bus: Driving Stratification Concepts Home.” *Teaching Sociology* 32(2): 213-221.
- Nichols, Laura, *Shannon Gleeson, and *Sandra Figueroa. 2004. Moving Beyond the Client Role: Helping Human Service Organizations Identify Program Participant’s Assets. *Social Insight* 8: 34-36.
- Nichols, Laura. 2004. Giving Students a Voice: Learning Through Autobiography. *Thought & Action* 19(2): 37-50.
- Nichols, Laura and Kathryn Feltey. 2003. The Woman is Not Always the Bad Guy: Resistance in the Discourse of Battered Women. *Violence Against Women* 9(7): 784-806.
- Nichols, Laura and Barbara Gault. 2003. Implications of Welfare Reform on Housing and School Instability. *Journal of Negro Education* 72(1): 104-116. (Invited Article.)
- Fernandez, Marilyn and Laura Nichols. 2002. Bridging and Bonding Capital: Pluralist Ethnic Relations in Silicon Valley. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 22(11/12): 104-122. (Invited Article.)
- Nichols, Laura. 2002. Participatory Program Planning: Including Program Participants and Evaluators. *Journal of Evaluation and Program Planning* 25(1): 1-14.
- Powers, Charles H., Marilyn Fernandez, and Laura Nichols. 2001. “Assessing Outcomes of an Education in Sociology: A Report on Preliminary Efforts at Santa Clara University.” Pages 34-49 in C. Holm and W. Johnson (Eds.). *Assessing Student Learning in Sociology*. Washington, DC: American Sociological Association.
- Erickson, Rebecca J., Laura Nichols, and Christian Ritter. 2000. Family Influences on Absenteeism: Testing an Expanded Process Model. *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 57: 246-272.
- Feltey, Kathryn and Laura Nichols. 1999. The Only Thing You Really Got is this Minute: Homeless Women Re-visioning the Future. In *Reclaiming the Future: Women’s Strategies for the 21st Century*, S. Brodribb (Ed.). Canada: Gynergy Books.
- Nichols, Laura and Linda Lumley. 1999. Involving Students in the Development of a Peer Education Program for College Women. *Journal of College Student Development* 40(4): 422-427.

* Indicates current or former undergraduate student.

Fernandez, Marilyn and Laura Nichols. 1996. "Ecological Approach in Practice: A Study of the Ounce of Prevention Fund." *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare* 23:121-141.

Nichols, Laura. 1996. [Review of the Book Hear My Testimony: Maria Teresa Tula, Human Rights Activist of El Salvador]. *Humanity and Society* 20:106-107.

REPORTS

Nichols, Laura. Thriving Neighbors Initiative. 2017. "Report of Impact 2013-2017." For the Ignatian Center for Jesuit Education. Santa Clara University.

Fairfield University, Santa Clara University, Loyola University Chicago. Immigrant Student National Research Project. Washington, DC, February 2013.

Sullivan, Kieran and Laura Nichols. *Faculty Work Life Balance at SCU*. For the ACE/Sloan Award submitted to the Office of Provost, Santa Clara University, May 2011.

Nichols, Laura (with *Leesa Riviere, and *Jaennika Aniag). *Ignatian Faculty Forum Evaluation: Results of Content and Qualitative Analysis*. Submitted to the Ignatian Center for Jesuit Education, Santa Clara University, March 2011.

Sánchez-Flores, Héctor and Laura Nichols. *The Health Trust Stakeholder Survey Report and Findings*. Submitted to The Health Trust, October 2010.

Fernandez, Marilyn, Laura Nichols, and Charles Powers. *Diversity and Multicultural Education at Santa Clara University: An Institutional Overview of Trends, Challenges, and Prospects*. Submitted to the James Irvine Foundation, June 4, 2002.

Nichols, Laura. Editor. *Entering the Ivory Tower: The Life Histories and Experiences of First Generation College Students at Santa Clara University*. May, 2002.

OTHER WORKS

Nichols, Laura. 2022. [Review of the Book *Geographies of Campus Inequality: Mapping the Diverse Experiences of First-Generation Students*. By Janel E. Benson and Elizabeth M. Lee. New York: Oxford University Press]. *American Journal of Sociology* 128(2):197-599.

Jones, Terry-Ann and Laura Nichols. 2018. "Undocumented: The Stress of Status." *Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education*.

Nichols, Laura. 2017. "Educational Inequality and First-Generation College Students." With guests: Lorenzo Gamboa, Erin Kimura-Walsh, and Alma Orozco. Integral Podcasts, Ignatian Center, Santa Clara University. <https://soundcloud.com/integralpod/educational-inequality-and-first-generation-college-students-with-laura-nichols>

EXTERNAL GRANT

West Coast Grantee and Coordinator/Researcher. “Undocumented Students at Jesuit Colleges and Universities.” Ford Foundation, Requested amount: \$200,000, Submitted February 26, 2010. Lead grantee is Fairfield University. Request granted, June 29, 2010. Subcontracted amount for SCU=\$48,114. Phase 2, SCU=\$17,333.

PRESENTATIONS

Nichols, Laura and Maria Valle. 2019. “College Undermatching of First-Generation College Students: The Structure of Work, Geography, and Family Economic Distress.” Paper presented at the American Sociological Association Conference. New York, NY, August.

Nichols, Laura 2017. “Realizing Our Missions: Social Desire Path Analysis and the Enrollment of Students Who Are Undocumented at Jesuit Colleges.” Paper presented at the AJCU Justice Conference. Seattle, WA, August.

Burns, Barbara, Nicole Branch, Irene Cermeño, Laura Chyu, Laura Nichols, Jennifer Nutefall, Maria Elizabeth Ramirez, facilitated by Jennifer Merritt. 2017. “Santa Clara University’s Thriving Neighbors Initiative Community Assessment.” Panel presentation at the AJCU Justice Conference. Seattle, WA, August.

Nichols, Laura. 2012. “Social Desire Paths: Broadening the Scope and Use of Sociology in Public Policy.” American Sociological Association. Denver, CO, August.

Dumais, Susan and Laura Nichols. 2012. “The Effect of Multigenerational Institutionalized Cultural Capital on Parenting Practices and Educational Outcomes.” American Sociological Association. Denver, CO, August.

Gagnon, Jessica, *Leesa Riviere, and Laura Nichols. 2011. “It Takes a Village to Raise a Doctor: Vocational Discernment, Social Capital, and Concerted Cultivation of First Generation Premedical Students.” Diversity Leadership Conference, Santa Clara, CA, April.

Nichols, Laura, *Lindsay Harke, *Karen Hernandez, and Ángel Islas. 2010. “The Depth & Use of Social Capital on the Path to Medical School.” Presented at the annual meeting of the Pacific Sociological Association, Oakland, CA, April.

Nichols, Laura. 2009. “Pedagogy in Practice and Producing Practicing Sociologists: A Community-Centric and Systems Approach to Course Design.” Presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA, August.

Nichols, Laura, *Karla Arango, Jessica Gagnon, *Lindsay Harke, and *Elva Salinas. 2009. “Concerted Cultivation in College: Differences Between First and Continuing Generation Premed Intended Students.” Presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA, August.

Nichols, Laura. 2009. "What Can I Do with a Sociology Major Anyway? Political Engagement, Community-Based Research, & the Applied Sociology Capstone." Presented at the annual meeting of the Pacific Sociological Association, San Diego, CA, April.

Nichols, Laura, *Karla Arango, and *Geraldine Linarte. 2008. "Straddlers and Mainstreamers in College: Symbolic Boundaries and Cultural Capital in Higher Education." Presented at the annual meeting of the Pacific Sociological Association, Portland, OR, April.

Nichols, Laura, Laurie Laird, Fernando Cazares, and *Angelica Rodriguez. 2008. "Four Perspectives on What It Means to Be an Engaged Campus: Community Based Learning in the Policy Context." Continuums of Service Conference, Portland, OR, April.

Donahue, David with Laura Nichols and six other Carnegie/Campus Compact Fellows. 2008. "Making the Political Explicit: Revisioning Service Learning to Promote Political Engagement." Continuums of Service Conference, Portland, OR, April.

Nichols, Laura and *Cristina Sanidad. 2007. "Disciplinary Perspectives on Vocation and Community-based Learning." Presented at the Callings Conference, Santa Clara University, CA, March.

Fernandez, Marilyn and Laura Nichols. 2005. "Getting a Head Start in College: An Assessment of a University Bridge Program." Presented at the annual meeting of the Pacific Sociological Association, Portland, OR, April.

Nichols, Laura, *Christina Kennedy, *Sandy Plascencia, *Crystal Tapiador. 2003. "Student Outcomes of an Applied Sociology Curriculum." Presented at the annual meeting of the California Sociological Association, Berkeley, CA, November.

Nichols, Laura. 2002. "Bringing Applied Sociology into the Undergraduate Curriculum." Presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Applied Sociology, Sacramento, CA, October.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Nichols, Laura. 2023, January. Invited panelist. Session: "Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement: The CLDE Coalition to Make College Civic Learning Inclusive and High Impact" at the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities. Washington, DC.

Nichols, Laura. 2022, September. San Diego Nativity Prep Academy. "Supporting Aspiring First-Generation College Students." Presentation to the Board. Zoom.

Nichols, Laura. 2022, February. Keynote Presentation. "Being Companions on The Journey: The Educational Trajectories of Nativity Miguel Students. At the Nativity Miguel School Network Winter Conference. Zoom.

Nichols, Laura. 2021, February. What Students Which Mission. Hank Center at Loyola University, Chicago Presentation on zoom with a response from Jennifer Boyle of Arrupe College. [Youtube recording](#) of the talk.

Nichols, Laura. 2017. "The Role of Catholic Schools in Reducing Educational and Economic Inequality." Boston College Roundtable. Dover, MA, April.

Nichols, Laura. 2015. "Response to: Daniel Finn's 'Catholicism and Modernity: What Economic Doctrines Can Teach Us.'" Boston College Roundtable. Boston, MA, November.

"All Are Welcome: Results of a National Study of Undocumented College Students at Jesuit Universities." 2013. Ethics at Noon, Santa Clara University. Lead contact and presenter with Cynthia Mertens, SCU School of Law; and Kristin Heyer, SCU Religious Studies, January.

"Ford Project Findings." 2012. Presentation at the Jesuit Association of Student Personnel Administrators, with Maria Guzman (Loyola University, Chicago) and Rick Ryscavage, S.J. (Fairfield University), Phoenix, AZ, March.

"Immigrant Students at Jesuit Universities." 2012. Special presentation at the Capital at the conclusion of the Ford grant. Presentation included the whole research team from SCU, Loyola University at Chicago, and Fairfield University. Washington, D.C., February.

Nichols, Laura. 2010. Invited presentation at the event: "Getting There: A Collaborative Conversation to Solve Homeless Transportation Needs." Hosted by PACT Local Organizing Committee, San José, CA, June.

Nichols, Laura. 2009. Invited presentation on the "The Structures of Poverty." To staff at Sacred Heart Community Services, San José, CA, April.

Nichols, Laura. 2006. "Entering the Ivory Tower: Exploring the Differences and Similarities Between First and Continuing Generation College Students." Keynote address at the Foundation Generation Project: First Generation Conference. St. Mary's College of California, April.

Nichols, Laura. 2006. Introduction of Dr. Kathryn Feltey for the Presidential Address at the North Central Sociological Association meetings, Indianapolis, IN, March.

RECENT PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

American Sociological Association, Teaching and Learning Symposium Committee. 2018-2021

American Sociological Association, ASA Section on Sociological Practice and Public Sociology Chair-Elect (2013-14), Chair (2014-15), Past-Chair (2015-16)

Commissioner, Commission on the Accreditation of Programs in Applied and Clinical Sociology (2012-2015). Secretary (2013-2015)

Reviewer for journals: *Social Problems*, *Journal of Applied Social Science*, *Sociological Perspectives*, *Teaching Sociology*, *American Sociological Review*

UNIVERSITY SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS

-Elected member, Grievance Committee 2022-2025. Natural Sciences and Social Sciences.

- *Special Assistant for Academic Initiatives*. 2022-2023. Office of the Provost. Focused on core curricula and transfer students.

-*President, Faculty Senate*. 2021-2022. President Elect and Chair of Faculty Elections 2020-21 and Past President/Member of Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate Council 2022-2023

-*Chair, Search Committee*. For Vice President of Mission and Ministry. Fall 2020-Winter 2021

-Elected member. College of Arts & Sciences *Promotion to Senior Lecturer Committee*. 2019-2022

-*Civic Engagement Faculty Core Committee* (Chair first two years) 2019-2022 and elected to another term 2022-2025

-*Faculty Fellow*. Economic Justice and the Common Good Research Group. Ignatian Center. 2016-2018.

-*Faculty Fellow*. Thriving Neighbors Initiative. 2015-2017. SCU.

-*Director, Undergraduate Core Curriculum*. July 1, 2013-July 1, 2017 and member of Academic Affairs Committee.

-*Chair, Department of Sociology*. Fall 2007; Fall 2008-Summer 2011. Santa Clara University

-*Member, DeNardo Lectureship Committee*. 2012-2017. Santa Clara University College of A&S

-*Member, Task Force for Formative Feedback to Administrators*. 2016-2017.

-Public Health Faculty Advisory Board. 2008-2014. Santa Clara University

-*Member, Rank and Tenure Sciences Committee*, College of Arts & Sciences. 2008-2011.

APPLIED RESEARCH & POLICY EXPERIENCE

Evaluator, Center for Multicultural Education, "Building Partnerships for Diversity" Irvine Diversity Project. (2001-2005). With Marilyn Fernandez.

Research Fellow, Institute for Women's Policy Research, Washington, DC. (1998-99). Wrote research and policy briefs, grant proposals, and conducted data analysis. Administered an electronic listserv focused on welfare reform, managed a database of researchers, and supervised interns.

Institutional & Family Interviewer, Cleveland Urban Change Project. Kent State University funded by Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (PI: Kathryn Edin, 1998-2001) and the Transitional Housing Project Evaluation, Akron, OH (1996).

Research Assistant, Center for Substance Abuse and Treatment SSI National Study, The University of Akron (1997-98). Responsibilities included codebook and instrument development, site contact, data cleaning and analysis.

Research Assistant/Evaluator. Kercher Center for Social Research, Western Michigan University (1994-95). Assisted on the outcome and process evaluations of three non-profit organizations, wrote research grants and final reports.

Program Director, Lions Center for the Blind, San Jose, California (1991-93). Responsible for program development, administration, and monitoring. Secured county and city funding and supervised paid and volunteer staff.

Jesuit Volunteer & Homeless Services Coordinator, Community Emergency Resources and Volunteer Services, Medford, Oregon (1990-91). Coordinated an emergency voucher and services program for homeless individuals. Secured funding from local foundations and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

HONORS and AWARDS

President's Award. Santa Clara University. With Barbara Burns and Laura Chyu for course integration and interdisciplinary collaboration with SCU's Thriving Neighbors Initiative. September 2016.

Brutocao Award for Curriculum Innovation, Santa Clara University. Fall 2008.

Student team won the Student Problem Solving Award from the Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology for their project on: "Outreach to the Homeless in Santa Clara County." 2006.

Support of University Mission Award. 2004. Santa Clara University. For work on the summer Bridge program and research with first generation college students.

Community Partner Award. From Grail Community Development Resource Center. For evaluation work did for their after-school literacy program. Fall 2003.

2001 Rosabeth Moss Kanter Award for Excellence in Work-Family Research: One of the top six articles published in 2000 for the paper: "Family Influences on Absenteeism: Testing an Expanded Process Model." (Co-authors: R. Erickson and C. Ritter.)