

DEVELOPMENT STUDIES (GRADUATE FIELD)

Program Website (<https://cals.cornell.edu/education/degrees-programs/graduate-field-development-studies/>)

Field Description

Our doctoral program in Development Studies focuses on 'development,' a central and contested concept that gained prominence after World War II, which implies progressive change towards improving economies and people's well-being while conserving nature at local, regional, and global scales. Faculty and graduate students in the field of Development Studies study processes of social, cultural, ecological, economic, and political change, and the historical and contemporary forces that shape those dynamics. They also study the organizations and actors that engage in development-related processes and the practices, knowledge, and forms of expertise they bring to bear on their work.

An interdisciplinary field, Development Studies draws from a wide range of disciplines, including sociology, economics, political science, human geography, anthropology, history, Indigenous and postcolonial studies, and the natural and technical sciences. Our doctoral students study in a range of contexts, some working directly with communities around the globe, others exploring large data sets or studying institutions as they seek to understand the complexities behind development and its impacts on people and the planet.

The program offers preparation for research, for the application of social sciences in government positions, the non-profit sector, consulting, and think tanks, and for college teaching in development studies and related fields.

For the Ph.D. degree, students are expected to demonstrate (1) a thorough knowledge of social theory in development studies, with special emphasis on theories in their major concentration, (2) knowledge of previous and current research pertinent to the concentration, and (3) knowledge of multiple research methods, including qualitative and quantitative, with special emphasis on research design, data collection, and analytical techniques relevant to study in the concentration.

Students are admitted into the Ph.D. program. If they do not have a M.S. degree in Development Studies or a related discipline, they will complete a qualifying paper or M.S. thesis as part of their training.

Research and study opportunities

Faculty in the field rely on a wide range of domestic and international funding to support research and graduate students. Graduate students also successfully apply for a wide range of internal and external grants for their fieldwork, such as the Wenner Gren fellowship, National Science Foundation and Fulbright fellowships.

Students and faculty members are actively conducting research around the globe, both in the United States and elsewhere. Although some doctoral dissertations are based on field-collected data, other candidates rely on rich secondary-data resources, working closely with the Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research (CISER) and the various libraries on campus.

Faculty members also participate in other fields such as Natural Resources, City and Regional Planning, Anthropology, Crop and Soil Sciences, in the Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies, and in

the area studies programs for Africa, Latin America, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. Several of those programs have supported dissertation research overseas. The department is also home to the Polson Institute for Global Development (<https://cals.cornell.edu/global-development/our-work/our-initiatives/polson-institute-global-development/>), which funds assorted working group research initiatives in the U.S. and abroad.

Data and Statistics

- Doctoral Program Statistics (<https://gradschool.cornell.edu/about/program-metrics-assessments-and-outcomes/doctoral-program-statistics/?SelectGradField=78>)

Field Manual

- Manual (<https://cals.cornell.edu/education/degrees-programs/graduate-field-development-studies/>)

Subject and Degrees

Development Sociology

- Development Sociology (PhD) (<https://catalog.cornell.edu/programs/development-sociology-phd/>)

Concentrations by Subject

Development Sociology

- development sociology (minor)
- methods of social research (minor)
- population and development
- rural and environmental sociology
- state, economy, and society

Faculty

Jenny Carson Aker (<http://cals.cornell.edu/jenny-aker/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: methods of social research; state, economy, and society
- **Research Interests:** Development Economics

Victoria Beard (<http://cals.cornell.edu/jenny-aker/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; rural and environmental sociology
- **Research Interests:** comparative urbanization, poverty and inequality, collective action, community development, infrastructure access, water and sanitation infrastructure

Andrew Reid Bell (<http://cals.cornell.edu/andrew-reid-bell/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: methods of social research; population and development; rural and environmental sociology
- **Research Interests:** rural livelihoods, decision-making, mobility, migration, natural resources

Aaron Seth Benanav (<http://cals.cornell.edu/aaron-benanav/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; state, economy, and society
- **Research Interests:** informality, unemployment, technology, automation, future of work, alternative economic systems

Sarah Besky (<http://einaudi.cornell.edu/discover/people/sarah-besky/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: rural and environmental sociology; state, economy, and society
- **Research Interests:** agrarian studies; gender and work; South Asia

Rachel Bezner Kerr (<http://cals.cornell.edu/rachel-bezner-kerr/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; methods of social research; rural and environmental sociology

Parfait M Eloundou-Enyegue (<http://cals.cornell.edu/parfait-martial-eloundou-enyegue/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; methods of social research; population and development; state, economy, and society
- **Research Interests:** population and development; sociology of education; demography of inequality and social change

Elias Friedman (<http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/people/eli-friedman/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: state, economy, and society
- **Research Interests:** Social movements, globalization, development, political sociology, work, and theory

Sarah Carissa Giroux (<http://cals.cornell.edu/sarah-giroux/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca - (Divisional Member)
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: population and development
- **Research Interests:** Methods of Social Research. Population and Development, Demography

Jenny Elaine Goldstein (<http://cals.cornell.edu/jenny-elaine-goldstein/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; methods of social research; rural and environmental sociology
- **Research Interests:** political ecology; critical development studies; ecological history; science and technology studies; food and agriculture; Southeast Asia

Mario Herrero Acosta (<http://cals.cornell.edu/mario-herrero/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: rural and environmental sociology
- **Research Interests:** Food systems, sustainability, environmental analysis, global change, scenarios, climate mitigation and adaptation, multi-scale methods for systems analysis, systems evolution and transitions, role of innovation in development

Thomas A Hirschl (<http://cals.cornell.edu/thomas-hirschl/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; methods of social research; population and development; state, economy, and society
- **Research Interests:** social stratification; research methods and statistics; state and local demography

Tristan Ivory (<http://einaudi.cornell.edu/discover/people/tristan-ivory/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; methods of social research; population and development; state, economy, and society
- **Research Interests:** International Migration Labor and Employment Relations Race and Ethnicity Social Mobility Stratification and Inequality Global and Transnational Sociology Demography Comparative and Historical Sociology Qualitative Methods Africana Studies

Karim-Aly S. Kassam (<http://cals.cornell.edu/karim-aly-kassam/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; methods of social research; state, economy, and society
- **Research Interests:** Indigenous and place-based ecological knowledge; Human ecology; Ethnobiology; Biocultural diversity; Pluralism; Food sovereignty and security; Participatory action research; Climate change adaptation; Social policy

Neema Kudva (<http://aap.cornell.edu/people/neema-kudva/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; rural and environmental sociology
- **Research Interests:** Community-based planning and development, Infrastructure and International planning, Social policy, Sustainability, Mobility

Lori Leonard (<http://cals.cornell.edu/lori-leonard/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: methods of social research; state, economy, and society
- **Research Interests:** Lori Leonard has a background in public health, and her work focuses on issues in medical sociology, gender studies, and the anthropology of policy. She is interested in the ways policies, planned improvement projects, changes in the natural world, and human responses to these events shape social and cultural life

Chuan Liao (<http://cals.cornell.edu/chuan-liao/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** Development Sociology: methods of social research; rural and environmental sociology; state, economy, and society
- **Research Interests:** Sustainability; food systems; spatial data science; human-environment systems

Fouad M. Makki (<http://cals.cornell.edu/fouad-makki/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; methods of social research; state, economy, and society
- **Research Interests:** sociology of development; classical and contemporary social theory; international political economy; historical sociology of modernity

Scott J Peters (<http://cals.cornell.edu/scott-j-peters/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: methods of social research; state, economy, and society
- **Research Interests:** sustainable and community development; civic professionalism

Sharon L. Sassler (<http://publicpolicy.cornell.edu/people/sharon-sassler/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; population and development
- **Research Interests:** social demography; union formation (marriage, cohabitation); immigrant adaptation; racial and ethnic differentiation; young adult transitions

John W. Sipple (<http://cals.cornell.edu/john-w-sipple/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; methods of social research; population and development; rural and environmental sociology
- **Research Interests:** sociology of education, rural studies, inequality studies

Richard C. Stedman (<http://cals.cornell.edu/richard-c-stedman/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; rural and environmental sociology
- **Research Interests:** linkages between social and ecological systems; natural resource and community interactions; natural resources; environmental sociology

Kurt B Waldman (<http://cals.cornell.edu/kurt-waldman/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: methods of social research; rural and environmental sociology
- **Research Interests:** Behavioral Science, Environmental Psychology, Sustainability, Agricultural Development, Judgment, and Decision-Making

Mildred Elaine Warner (<http://aap.cornell.edu/people/mildred-warner/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; state, economy, and society
- **Research Interests:** community development, economic development, state and local government policy

Marina A. Welker (<http://anthropology.cornell.edu/marina-andrea-welker/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; state, economy, and society
- **Research Interests:** International development, corporations, tobacco, extractive industries, Southeast Asia

Steven A Wolf (<http://cals.cornell.edu/steven-wolf/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; rural and environmental sociology; state, economy, and society
- **Research Interests:** environmental and natural resource sociology; environmental governance; multifunctional agricultural and forest development; institutional analysis of innovation

Wendy W. Wolford (<http://cals.cornell.edu/wendy-w-wolford/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; methods of social research; rural and environmental sociology; state, economy, and society
- **Research Interests:** political economy of development; social and economic geography; political ecology; land tenure; agrarian studies

John Aloysius Zinda (<http://cals.cornell.edu/john-alloysius-zinda/>)

- **Campus:** Ithaca
- **Concentrations:** *Development Sociology*: development sociology; rural and environmental sociology
- **Research Interests:** Environmental Sociology, Development and Globalization, Contemporary China, Rural Livelihoods, Community, Agriculture, Land Use Change, Qualitative Methods, Spatial Data Analysis, Mixed Methods