"Crime and Punishment in the Life Course: Institutional Spillovers and the Stickiness of Public Labels"

Dr. Chris Uggen, University of Minnesota
Regents Professor, Martindale Chair, and Distinguished McKnight Professor in Sociology, Law, and Public Affairs

Life course sociology and criminology provide compelling evidence that the distinction between “criminal” and “non-criminal” is largely a matter of time. Yet crime discourse and policy remain rooted in the notion of criminality as an immutable characteristic. This talk contrasts the fluidity in criminal behavior with the growing stickiness of public labels, drawing from experimental studies of criminal records on work and school outcomes, demographic analysis of changes in the population bearing such records, and their spillover effects on health care, social services, and other institutions. After summarizing some classic and emerging U.S. policy interventions, I conclude by discussing prospects for the future.

Speaker Bio: Chris Uggen is Regents Professor, Martindale Chair, and Distinguished McKnight Professor in Sociology, Law, and Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. He studies crime, law, and inequality from a life course perspective, firm in the belief that sound research can help build a more just and peaceful world. With Jeff Manza, he wrote Locked Out: Felon Disenfranchisement and American Democracy (2006), and he publishes extensively in criminology, criminal justice, law, and sociology. Current projects include comparative study of reentry from different types of institutions, the long-term consequences of harassment and discrimination, crime and justice after genocide, monetary sanctions, and the health effects of incarceration. His outreach and engagement projects include editing Contexts Magazine (2007-2011) and TheSocietyPages.Org (both with Doug Hartmann), a book series and multimedia social science hub that drew four million readers last year. He is a fellow of the American Society of Criminology and served as the 2017-2018 Vice President of the American Sociological Association.