Keynote Cecilia Menjivar (Sociology, University of Kansas – Lawrence)

Central American Immigrants Navigate the Everyday US Ethnoracial Landscape

Central Americans maneuver the U.S. racial/ethnic landscape in ways that highlight their “minority within a minority” position in specific ways. Sometimes they “pass” for the larger groups in which they are categorized and other times they separate themselves from these larger groups, all in situational fashion. These interactions and self definitions are informed by frameworks of racial and ethnic hierarchies that Central American bring with them as well as by the U.S. legal and social contexts that receive them here. Class, gender, and other social cleavages are key, as not all Central Americans employ the same frameworks in the same way or have the same experiences.