

# The Department of Sociology and The Department of Criminal Justice Presents:

■ **Monday, November 2, 2009**

**Ramiro Martinez Jr., Professor of Criminal Justice  
Florida International University, Department of Criminal Justice**

*“Immigration and Crime in an Era of Transformation: A Longitudinal Analysis of Homicides in San Diego Neighborhoods, 1980-2000”*

Emerging research associated with the “Immigration Revitalization” perspective suggests that immigration has been inaccurately labeled as a cause of crime in contemporary society. In fact, crime appears to be unexpectedly low in many communities that exhibit high levels of classic indicators of social disorganization: residential instability, ethnic heterogeneity, and immigration. But virtually all of the research conducted to date has been cross-sectional in nature and therefore unable to demonstrate how the relationship between immigration and crime might co-vary over time. This is a significant limitation, especially because current versions of Social Disorganization theory posit a dynamic relationship between structural factors and crime that unfolds over time. The current study addresses this issue by exploring the effects of immigration on neighborhood-level homicide trends in the city of San Diego, California, using a combination of racially/ethnically disaggregated homicide victim data and community structural indicators collected for three decennial census periods. Consistent with the revitalization thesis, results show that the increased size of the foreign-born population reduces lethal violence over time. Specifically, we find that neighborhoods with a larger share of immigrants have fewer total, non-Latino White, and Latino homicide victims. More broadly, our findings suggest that social disorganization in heavily immigrant cities may be largely a function of economic deprivation rather than forms of “neighborhood” or “system” stability.

**For additional information,  
please contact Patrick Carr at  
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**1:30 p.m.  
LSH, Room A232  
Livingston Campus**