

## RACHEL ELLIS

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### ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

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- 2020–*present* Assistant Professor, Criminology and Criminal Justice  
Faculty Affiliate, Sociology (beginning 2023)  
University of Maryland
- 2017–2020 Assistant Professor, Criminology and Criminal Justice  
University of Missouri-St. Louis

### EDUCATION

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- 2017 Ph.D. Sociology, University of Pennsylvania  
2012 M.A. Sociology, University of Pennsylvania  
2010 B.A. Sociology and French, Georgetown University (*Magna cum laude*, *Phi Beta Kappa*)

### AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

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Punishment, Gender, Prisons, Reentry, Religion, Qualitative Methods

### PUBLICATIONS

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#### **Book**

- 2023 **Ellis, Rachel.** *In This Place Called Prison: Women's Religious Life in the Shadow of Punishment.* Oakland, CA: **University of California Press.**

\*Reviews in [Affilia: Feminist Inquiry in Social Work](#), [Criminal Law and Criminal Justice Books](#), [Gender & Society](#), [Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion](#), [Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion](#), [Journal of Contemporary Religion](#), [Political Theology](#), [Review of Religious Research](#), [Sociology of Religion](#)

\*Media coverage in [Maryland Today](#), [Pennsylvania Gazette](#), [UC Press Blog](#)

\*Author-Meets-Critics (*Upcoming*): American Society of Criminology, American Sociological Association, Society for the Scientific Study of Religion

\*Book talks: Harvard University, The Lecture Group of Baltimore, Northwestern University Prison Education Program, CCBC Essex, Georgetown University, University of Maryland, American University, University of Notre Dame. *Upcoming*: University of New Mexico, Arizona State University

#### **Peer-Reviewed Articles** (^denotes graduate student co-author)

- Forthcoming* **Ellis, Rachel** and Victoria Inzana^. *Accepted and published [onlinefirst](#).* "Salvation Scripts: How Religion Matters for Women's Desistance Narratives." *Justice Quarterly*.

- 2023 **Ellis, Rachel.** “What Do We Mean By a ‘Hard-to-Reach’ Population? Legitimacy versus Precarity as Barriers to Access.” *Sociological Methods & Research* 52(3):1556-1586.
- 2023 Branigan, Amelia, **Rachel Ellis**, Wade Jacobsen, and Anna Haskins. “System Management and Compensatory Parenting: Educational Involvement Following Maternal Incarceration.” *Criminology* 61(3):482-517.
- 2021 **Ellis, Rachel.** “‘You’re not serving time, you’re serving Christ’: Protestant Religion and Discourses of Responsibilization in a Women’s Prison.” *British Journal of Criminology* 61(6):1647-1664.  
 \***Student Paper Award**, 2017, American Sociological Association Section on Religion  
 \***Gene Carte Student Paper Award**, Third Place, 2017, American Society of Criminology  
 \*Media coverage in [OMNIA Magazine](#)
- 2021 **Ellis, Rachel.** “Prisons as Porous Institutions.” *Theory & Society* 50(2):175-199.  
 \*Lead article
- 2020 **Ellis, Rachel.** “Redemption and Reproach: Religion and Carceral Control in Action among Women in Prison.” *Criminology* 58(4):747-772.
- 2018 **Ellis, Rachel.** “‘It’s Not Equality’: How Race, Class, and Gender Define the Normative Religious Self among Female Prisoners.” *Social Inclusion* 6(2):181-191. (Special Issue)
- 2017 **Ellis, Rachel.** “Silent Disagreement: Microinteractional Solutions to Moral Dissent among Catholic Converts.” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 56(2):383-397.
- 2015 **Ellis, Rachel.** “Outreach and Exclusion: Jewish Denominational Marketing in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 54(1):38-56.  
 \***Student Paper Award**, 2012, Society for the Scientific Study of Religion

### ***Manuscripts in Progress***

- Ellis, Rachel**, Melissa J. Wilde, and Gabrielle Wy<sup>^</sup>. “Religious Reformers: How Varied Beliefs in Eugenics Shaped Views of Juvenile Delinquency in the Post-Progressive Era.” *R&R*.
- Ellis, Rachel**, Ziyue Gu<sup>^</sup>, and Frank Donohue<sup>^</sup>. Probation among Women in Baltimore, MD. *In Preparation*.
- Ellis, Rachel.** Inequality and Probation Sentence among Women. *In Preparation*.
- Ellis, Rachel.** Analysis of Parole Decision-Making in Pennsylvania. *In Preparation*.

### ***Public-Facing, Editor-Reviewed Scholarship***

- 2024 **Ellis, Rachel.** “Author’s Reply to Book Talk Response by Cesraéa Rumpf.” *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion* 20(1):5-9.

- 2020 **Ellis, Rachel.** “Prison Labor in a Pandemic.” *Contexts* 19(4):90-91.
- 2020 **Ellis, Rachel.** “In Prison in a Pandemic: Gender Behind Bars.” *The Gender Policy Report*.  
<https://genderpolicyreport.umn.edu/in-prison-in-a-pandemic-gender-behind-bars/>  
 \*Featured in the *Top 10 Most Read GPR Articles of the Year*

### ***Pedagogical Scholarship***

- 2021 **Ellis, Rachel,** with undergraduate student contributions. 2021. “Engaged Pedagogy in the Classroom: A Visual Essay.” *American Anthropologist* ([Special Issue](#) on “Carceral Crisis”)

### **GRANTS AND AWARDS**

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#### ***National***

- 2024 *Institute for Humane Studies Course Buyout Award* (\$19,300)  
George Mason University
- 2021–2023 *Pipeline Grant for Emerging Scholars* (\$29,998)  
Russell Sage Foundation
- 2016–2017 *Dissertation Completion Fellowship* (\$33,000)  
Mellon / American Council of Learned Societies
- 2016–2017 *Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship* (honorary)  
Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation
- 2016–2017 *Dissertation Fellowship* (honorary)  
Louisville Institute
- 2012–2015 *Graduate Research Fellowship* (\$96,000)  
National Science Foundation
- 2014 *Constant H. Jacquet Research Award* (\$5,000)  
Religious Research Association
- 2014 *Joseph H. Fichter Research Grant* (\$2,500)  
Association for the Sociology of Religion

#### ***University***

- 2024 *Maryland Research Excellence Honoree*  
University of Maryland
- 2024 *Independent Scholarship, Research, and Creativity Awards* (\$10,000)  
University of Maryland

2018–2019	<i>Research Board Grant</i> (\$36,629) University of Missouri System
2016–2017	<i>Dissertation Completion Fellowship</i> (honorary) University of Pennsylvania
2014 & 2013	<i>Gertrude and Otto Pollak Summer Research Fellowship</i> (\$5,000) University of Pennsylvania
2011	<i>Philip E. Goldfein Research Award</i> (\$875) Jewish Studies Program at the University of Pennsylvania
2010–2011	<i>Pew Presidential Prize Fellowship</i> (\$26,800) University of Pennsylvania
2010	<i>Hoggson Award for Excellence in Sociology</i> Georgetown University

## INVITED TALKS

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2023–2024	<p><i>In This Place Called Prison</i>: Book Talks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Arizona State University</i>, School of Criminology &amp; Criminal Justice. Upcoming: September 16, 2024</li> <li>▪ <i>University of New Mexico</i>, Department of Sociology &amp; Criminology. Upcoming: Fall 2024</li> <li>▪ <i>Harvard University</i>, Department of Sociology, Contemporary Ethnography and Inequality Workshop. January 25, 2024</li> <li>▪ <i>The Lecture Group</i>, Baltimore, MD. January 17, 2024</li> <li>▪ <i>Northwestern University Prison Education Program</i>, Field Methods Seminar. December 8, 2023</li> <li>▪ <i>Community College of Baltimore County, Essex</i>. October 23, 2023</li> <li>▪ <i>Georgetown University</i>, Department of Sociology. September 20, 2023</li> <li>▪ <i>University of Maryland</i>, Department of Criminology &amp; Criminal Justice. May 4, 2023</li> <li>▪ <i>American University</i>, Department of Justice, Law, and Criminology, School of Public Affairs. April 11, 2023</li> <li>▪ <i>University of Notre Dame</i>, Sociology Department, Center for the Study of Religion and Society. February 27, 2023</li> </ul>
2024	<p>University of Michigan, Russell Sage Foundation <i>Pipeline Scholars Capstone Conference</i> (upcoming: June 3-4, 2024) Paper: “Punished in Plain Sight: Women’s Experiences on Probation”</p>
2024	<p>Brown University Hosted by Urban Institute and Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs <i>Punishment Beyond Mass Incarceration Symposium</i> (April 4-5, 2024) Panelist: “Conditions Inside: Complicating Labor and Control”</p>

- 2021 Columbia University  
*Department of Psychology, Social and Moral Cognition Lab*  
“‘I’ll Get Out in God’s Time’: Religious Redemption and Carceral Control in a U.S. State Women’s Prison” (virtual talk)
- 2020 London School of Economics  
*Department of Methodology Seminar Series*  
“What do We Mean by a ‘Hard to Reach’ Population?” (virtual talk)
- 2018 Washington University in St. Louis  
*John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics Colloquium Series*  
“Obedience is a Sure Favor: Prison Religion and Inequality”
- 2018 Loyola University Chicago  
*Chicago Area for the Study of Religious Communities Working Group*  
“Obedience is a Sure Favor: Prison Religion and Inequality”
- 2016 University of Pennsylvania  
*Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies Interdisciplinary Colloquium*  
“Daughters of Christ in the D.O.C.: Religion Inside a State Women’s Prison”
- 2015 University of Pennsylvania  
*Culture and Interaction Workshop*  
“Breaking Every Chain: Religion, Faith, and Identity of Incarcerated Women”
- 2014 University of Pennsylvania  
*Alice Paul Center for Research on Women, Gender, & Sexuality, 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference*  
“Incarceration and Intersectionality: Race/Class/Gender in a Women’s Prison”

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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### *Panels Organized*

- 2023 Session Organizer, “Religion and Justice: The Transformative Power of Religion in the Criminal Legal System,” American Sociological Association, Philadelphia, PA
- 2021 Session Co-Organizer, “Gender and Punishment,” American Society of Criminology, Chicago, IL
- 2020 Session Co-Organizer, “Gender and Punishment,” American Society of Criminology, Washington, DC (Canceled due to Covid-19)
- 2018 Session Organizer, “Qualitative Insights into the Social Organization of Prison: Moving Past Old Debates,” American Society of Criminology, Atlanta, GA
- 2017 Session Organizer, “Gender, Race, and State Control in Prison,” American Society of Criminology, Philadelphia, PA

## ***Papers Presented***

- 2024      *Upcoming*: “Book Forum (formerly Author-Meets-Critics) for *In This Place Called Prison: Women’s Religious Life in the Shadow of Punishment?*” Critics: Forrest Stuart, TaLisa Carter, Lynne Haney, David Harding, Annette Lareau (chair)
- American Sociological Association, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
- 2024      *Upcoming*: “Author-Meets-Critics Panel for *In This Place Called Prison: Women’s Religious Life in the Shadow of Punishment?*” Critics: Janet Garcia-Hallett, Matthew Clair, Jamie Fader, Jill McCorkel, Shadd Maruna (chair)
- American Society of Criminology, San Francisco, CA
- 2024      *Upcoming*: “Second Chance or Set Up to Fail? Inequality in Women’s Lived Experiences on Probation,” with Ziyue Gu<sup>^</sup> and Frank A. Donohue<sup>^</sup>.
- American Society of Criminology, San Francisco, CA
- 2024      *Upcoming*: “Institutional and Personal Narratives of Reporting Academic Sexual Misconduct,” with Sarah Silberman<sup>^</sup>.
- American Society of Criminology, San Francisco, CA
- 2024      *Upcoming*: “Author-Meets-Critics Panel for *In This Place Called Prison: Women’s Religious Life in the Shadow of Punishment?*” Critics: Orit Avishai, Edward Flores, Jeffrey Guhin, Amanda Napior, Sabina Vaught, Tricia Bruce (chair)
- Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Pittsburgh, PA
- 2023      “Supervised and Controlled: Women’s Experiences on Probation.”
- American Society of Criminology, Philadelphia, PA
- 2023      “Theorizing Prisons as Porous Institutions in the Context of Covid-19.”
- American Society of Criminology, Philadelphia, PA
- 2023      “Conducting Qualitative Research on Probation in the Covid-19 Era: Challenges and Possibilities.”
- Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Salt Lake City, UT
- 2023      “Finding Freedom through Religion in a Women’s Prison.”
- American Sociological Association, *Section Session Organizer and Presenter*, Philadelphia, PA
- 2023      “Author Meets Critics: *Invisible Mothers: Unseen Yet Hypervisible after Incarceration* by Janet Garcia-Hallett.”
- Eastern Sociological Society, Baltimore, MD
- 2022      “‘We blame... the parents’: Eugenics and Juvenile Delinquency after the Progressive Era,” with Melissa J. Wilde and Gabrielle Cabrera Wy<sup>^</sup>.
- American Society of Criminology, Atlanta, GA
  - Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Baltimore, MD

- 2022 “By The Least Restrictive Means? Administering Religious Freedom in a State Women’s Prison.”
- American Sociological Association, *Thematic Panel*, Los Angeles, CA
- 2022 “It Takes a Village or a Higher Power? Narrative Mechanisms of Religion among Desisting Mothers,” with Victoria Inzana^.
- Western Society of Criminology, Honolulu, HI
- 2021 “‘The Woman God Placed Me On This Earth to Be’: Religion, Recovery, and Reentry from Prison,” with Victoria Inzana^.
- American Society of Criminology, *Thematic Panel*, Chicago, IL
- 2021 “Teaching Religion in the Social Sciences: Sociology and Criminology”
- Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, *Invited Panel*, Portland, OR (virtual presentation)
- 2021 “Educational Involvement Among Formerly Incarcerated Mothers”
- American Sociological Association (virtual presentation)
- 2020 “Teaching Religion in the Social Sciences: Sociology and Criminology”
- Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, *Invited Panel*, Pittsburgh, PA  
\*canceled due to COVID-19\*
- 2020 “Motherhood, Addiction, and Prisoner Reentry”
- American Society of Criminology, *Thematic Panel*, Washington, DC  
\*canceled due to COVID-19\*
- 2019 “Author Meets Critics: *Jesus Saved an Ex-Con* (2018, NYU Press) by Edward Orozco Flores”
- Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, St. Louis, MO
- 2019 “Obedience is a Sure Favor: How Religion Leads to Material Inequality in a Women’s Prison”
- American Society of Criminology, *Thematic Panel*, San Francisco, CA
  - Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, St. Louis, MO
  - American Sociological Association, *Criminology Session*, New York, NY
- 2018 “How Religion Structures the Social World of Incarcerated Women”
- American Society of Criminology, *Thematic Panel Organizer & Presenter*, Atlanta, GA
- 2018 “‘It’s Not Equality’: How Race, Class, and Gender Define the Normative Religious Self among Female Prisoners”
- American Sociological Association, Philadelphia, PA
- 2017 “Sanctioning the Sacred: Religion and Sexuality among Female Inmates”

- American Society of Criminology, *Thematic Panel Organizer & Presenter*, Philadelphia, PA
  - Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Washington, DC
- 2016 “Daughters of Christ in the D.O.C.: Religion Inside a State Women’s Prison”
- American Society of Criminology, New Orleans, LA
  - American Sociological Association, Sociology of Religion Section Session, Seattle, WA
  - Association for the Sociology of Religion, Seattle, WA
  - Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Atlanta, GA
- 2015 “Breaking Every Chain: Religion, Faith, and Identity of Incarcerated Women”
- American Society of Criminology, Washington, DC
  - American Sociological Association, Chicago, IL
  - Association for the Sociology of Religion, Chicago, IL
  - Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Newport Beach, CA
- 2014 “Maintaining Order in the Face of Conflict: A Microinteractional Approach to Catholic Conversion”
- American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA
  - Association for the Sociology of Religion, San Francisco, CA
  - Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Indianapolis, IN
- 2014 “The Social Mobility of American Jews,” with Melissa J. Wilde and Stephen Viscelli (equal authorship).
- American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA
- 2013 “Rejecting the Teachings, Joining the Religion? Ethnography of a Catholic Conversion Class”
- American Sociological Association, New York, NY
- 2013 “The Social Mobility of American Jews,” with Melissa J. Wilde, Kristin Geraty, and Stephen Viscelli (equal authorship).
- Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Boston, MA
  - Association for the Sociology of Religion, New York, NY
- 2013 “Marketing to Whom? Nativity, Ethnicity, and Social Class of Jewish Denominations’ Desired Members in the Early 20th Century”
- Institute for Religion, Economics, and Society, Chapman University, Orange, CA
- 2013 “Social Networks and Denominational Identity: Immigrants and Jewish Denominations in the Early 20th Century”
- Jewish Studies Program Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Colloquium, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA



- 2012 “Marketing to Whom? Desired Members and Jewish Denominational Niches, 1913-1920”
- American Sociological Association, Denver, CO
  - Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Phoenix, AZ
- 2011 “Why High EE Churches are Stronger: Interaction Ritual Chains and Denominational Strength”
- American Sociological Association, Las Vegas, NV
  - Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Milwaukee, WI

## TEACHING

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### *University of Maryland*

- 2020–present CCJS 699Q Seminar in Qualitative Methods (graduate)  
 CCJS 600 Seminar in Criminal Justice (Nanjing Program, graduate)  
 CCJS 418C Gender and Crime (undergraduate)  
 CCJS 342 Corrections (undergraduate)

### *University of Missouri-St. Louis*

- 2017–2020 CRIMIN 6454 Corrections (graduate)  
 CRIMIN 4390 Senior Capstone: “Perspectives of the Punished” (undergraduate)  
 CRIMIN 2260 Corrections (undergraduate)

### *Johns Hopkins University*

- 2017 Locked Up: Sociology of the Prison Experience (*Visiting Instructor*, undergraduate)

## NATIONAL-LEVEL PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

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Reviewer *American Journal of Sociology, American Sociological Review, Criminology, Deviant Behavior, Feminist Criminology, Incarceration, Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, Social Problems, Social Science History, Sociological Inquiry, Sociological Methodology, Sociological Quarterly, Sociology of Race and Ethnicity, Theory & Society, Qualitative Sociology*

Editorial Board *Criminology* (2024-2026)

Grant Reviewer *Russell Sage Foundation, Social Science Research Council*

### American Society of Criminology

- 2024 Mentoring Program Committee (Member)  
*ASC Division of Corrections and Sentencing*

- 2023 Student Paper Award (Member)  
*ASC Division on Critical Criminology and Social Justice*
- 2023 Anat Kimchi Memorial Travel Award Committee (Member)  
*ASC Division of Corrections and Sentencing*
- 2022–2023 Membership Committee (Member)  
*American Society of Criminology*
- 2022 Ben Steiner Student Paper Award Committee (Member)  
*ASC Division of Corrections and Sentencing*
- 2020 Gene Carte Student Paper Award Competition (Member)  
*American Society of Criminology*

American Sociological Association

- 2024 Student Paper Award Committee (Chair)  
*ASA Section on Crime, Law, and Deviance*
- 2023 Nominations Committee (Member)  
*ASA Section on Crime, Law, and Deviance*
- 2020–2023 Council Member  
*ASA Section on Religion*
- 2021–2022 Nominating Committee (Member)  
*ASA Section on Religion*
- 2018–2020 Ad-Hoc Membership Committee (Chair)  
*ASA Section on Religion*
- 2018 Sally Hacker Graduate Student Paper Award Committee (Member)  
*ASA Section on Sex and Gender*
- 2018 Philadelphia Liaison Committee (Chair)  
*ASA Section on Sex and Gender*

Society for the Scientific Study of Religion

- 2024 Student Travel Awards Committee (Chair)  
*SSSR*
- 2023 Student Travel Awards Committee (Member)  
*SSSR*
- 2020–2022 Nominating Committee (Member)  
*SSSR*

2015 Committee on Postdoctoral Support for Research on Religion (Member)  
*SSSR*

### Other

2013 Interdisciplinary Religion Conference Planning Committee (Member)  
*University of Pennsylvania*

### **DEPARTMENTAL AND UNIVERSITY-LEVEL SERVICE**

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2022–2025 Faculty Senator (Representative for BSOS)  
*University Senate*

2023–2024 Workload Policy Committee (Member)  
*University of Maryland, Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice*

2023–2024 Graduate Program Assessment Committee (Member)  
*University of Maryland, Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice*

2023–2024 Graduate Affairs/Awards Committee (Member)  
*University of Maryland, Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice*

2022 Chair Search Committee (Assistant Professor Representative)  
*University of Maryland, BSOS, Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice*

2020–2022 Graduate Affairs/Awards Committee (Member)  
*University of Maryland, Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice*

2020–2022 Departmental Teaching & Undergraduate Curriculum Review Committee (Member)  
*University of Maryland, Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice*

2020–2021 Anti-Black Racism Subcommittee on Policy & Community Engagement (Member)  
*University of Maryland*

Fall 2020 General Comprehensive Exam Committee (Member)  
*University of Maryland, Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice*

2019–2020 Undergraduate Committee (Member)  
*University of Missouri-St. Louis, Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice*

2019–2020 Graduate Student Book Club (Faculty Coordinator)  
*University of Missouri-St. Louis, Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice*

### **GRADUATE STUDENT ADVISING**

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PhD Dissertation Committee: Sarah Silberman, UMD (2023 – *present*), Chair

MA Thesis Committee:

Cassandra Philippon, UMD (2021 – 2023), Co-Chair  
Lisa Pierotte, UMD (2023 – 2024), Member  
Claire Greene, UMSL (2019 – 2022), Member  
Alexandra (Xandie) Wood, UMD (2023-2024), Chair  
Carly Brownstein, UMD (2023-2024), Chair  
Elena Tapia, UMD (2024 – *present*), Member  
Jocelyn Evans, UMD (2022-2024), Member  
Gwynne Shepherd, UMD (2022-2024), Member  
Isabella Castillo, UMD (2022-2023), Member  
Cassidy Mitchell, UMSL (2018 – 2019), Member

New Student Advisees:

Daniel Fredes, UMD (2023-2024)  
Xandie Wood, UMD (2022-2024)  
Elena Tapia, UMD (2022-2024)  
Frank Donohue, UMD (2021-2022)  
Heidi Neff, UMD (2021-2022)  
Victoria Inzana, UMSL (2019 – 2020), Chair  
Amanda Miller, UMSL (2017 – 2020), Chair  
Alessandra Early, UMSL (2019 – 2020), Member  
Ashley Cox, UMSL (2019 – 2020), Member  
Claire Greene, UMSL (2017 – 2019), Member

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

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American Sociological Association

*Section on Crime, Law, and Deviance*

*Section on Religion*

*Theory Section*

Society for the Scientific Study of Religion

American Society of Criminology

*Division on Corrections and Sentencing*

*Division on Critical Criminology & Social Justice*

*Division of Feminist Criminology*