

SBS History

In 1960, UCSF School of Nursing began to recruit sociologists to conduct research related to health, teach research methodology to selected students in the Masters Program in Nursing, and to provide, through substantive course work, emphasis upon social aspects of health and illness. Sociology faculty gradually became integrated into the intellectual life and programs of UCSF and the School of Nursing by assisting nursing faculty with their own research, helping those students attracted to the sociological perspective and methodology to develop research careers in nursing, and developing courses suitable to the substantive interests of graduate nursing students.

In the following years, the sociology faculty developed plans for a Ph.D. degree-granting program in sociology. Their objectives, then as now, were 1) to train select numbers of sociology and health profession students for advanced careers in research and teaching in sociology of health and illness, and 2) to establish on the UCSF campus a nationally and internationally recognized unit for sociological research and training, especially in medical and health areas. The Graduate Program in Sociology was authorized to grant the Ph.D. in 1968.

Almost simultaneously, the School of Nursing developed its own Doctoral Nursing Program (DNSc), based on the growing number of doctorally-prepared nursing faculty and strong reputation of the sociology faculty. Although both programs developed separately, sociology faculty served, and continue to serve, the School of Nursing by teaching substantive courses, participating on qualifying exam and dissertation committees and providing instruction in research methods and analysis to those graduate nursing students for whom sociological perspectives and methodologies are congruent with their own interests.

With its inception in 1968, the UCSF Doctoral Program in Sociology became the only doctoral program specializing in medical sociology in the state of California and the first of a limited number of such programs in the United States. Since then, the UCSF Program has established itself as a strong and important center for medical sociology research and training transnationally. In addition to the reputation of its faculty in medical sociology, what initially and clearly distinguished the UCSF program was its early and continuing methodological emphasis upon research data gained directly from interviews and field observations and upon qualitative data analysis, particularly grounded theory.

In 1972, the School of Nursing departmentalized, and the Graduate Program in Sociology was incorporated into the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS). In 1979, the Aging Health Policy Center was established within the Department, attracting researchers with skills in quantitative research and survey methodology who were knowledgeable in social policy, aging, and the organization, financing, and delivery of health care and long-term care. In 1985, the center was officially designated by the Regents of the University of California as an organized research unit (ORU) and renamed the Institute for Health & Aging (IHA). The primary faculty appointment of all full-time research faculty must be in a department; most Institute of Health and Aging (IHA) faculty are appointed in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences. These faculty, who work in both the Institute and the Department, bring

considerable methodological and substantive strengths which have been integrated into the Doctoral Sociology Program. The substantial extramural funds raised by the Institute also provide additional faculty support and student research positions for the Graduate Program in Sociology. The aging program gradually expanded to include issues of chronic illness, disability, health care economics, and health policy.

With the rise of national interest in women's rights and women's health, an integrated core of courses on women's health and healing was introduced by department faculty in the mid-1970s. This program then won a major three-year grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) to support three Summer Institutes in Women, Health and Healing in 1984, 1985, and 1986 (organized by Professors Olesen, Ruzek and Clarke). These two-week Institutes were designed for faculty in post-secondary educational settings who planned to teach or organize programs in the areas of women's health. Those attending included sociology and nursing faculty from all parts of the world as well as the United States. The faculty also prepared and disseminated three volumes of curricular materials on Women, Health and Healing, including *Minority Women, Health and Healing in the U.S.: Selected Bibliography and Resources*, the only such bibliography published for many years. With new faculty, the women's health program has expanded into the specialty of gender, race, class and health/health inequalities broadly construed. Such topics are now examined both domestically and transnationally.

Since c1990, through new faculty, a new specialty has been offered in science, technology and medicine studies, concomitant with the establishment of the Science, Knowledge and Technology Section of the American Sociological Association and other professional groups. This specialty also is linked with faculty and curricula offered in the UCSF Department of Anthropology, History and Social Medicine, and with the Science, Technology and Society Center at UC Berkeley. Today the Doctoral Program in Sociology also offers coursework in violence as a health issue, global health, and aging and disability in global perspective.

In 2010, the National Research Council (NRC) ranked doctorate programs in sociology. The survey, the first of its kind since 1995, did not assign a single rank to any program, but placed programs within two ranges (see article [here](#) ^[1]). The UCSF Doctoral Program in Sociology was ranked according to one set of criteria (the R ranking) 15-80 and according to a second set of criteria (the S ranking) 6-20 out of 118 programs, placing it among the nation's best despite its comparatively small size. Another notable accomplishment is that five alumni of the Doctoral Program in Sociology have won the Roberta G. Simmons Outstanding Dissertation in Medical Sociology Award from the Medical Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association.

Anselm Strauss *December 18, 1916-September 5, 1996*

Sociologist Anselm Strauss was internationally known as a medical sociologist (especially for his pioneering attention to chronic illness and dying) and as the developer (with Barney Glaser) of grounded theory, an innovative method of qualitative analysis widely used in sociology, nursing, education, social work, and organizational studies. He also wrote extensively on Chicago sociology/symbolic interactionism, sociology of work, social worlds/arenas theory, social psychology and urban imagery. When he died he was Professor Emeritus of Sociology in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, School of Nursing, University of California, San Francisco. Many of Strauss's books are still in print, and his works have been translated into eight other languages. His culminating theoretical statement was *Continual Permutations of Action* (1993). He had just finished proofreading his

32nd book the day before he died.

Please visit the [Anselm Strauss website](#) ^[2] for more information on the legacy he left.

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[1] <http://www.ucsf.edu/news/2010/09/4460/ucsf-graduate-programs-receive-top-rankings-national-survey>

[2] <http://dne2.ucsf.edu/public/anselmstrauss>