

School of Criminal Justice,
Rutgers University,
123 Washington St.,
Newark, NJ 07102-3094.

(973) 353-2805 
@vbacak 
valerio-bacak 
valerio.bacak@rutgers.edu 

VALERIO BAĆAK

appointments	School of Criminal Justice, Rutgers University Associate Professor, 2021–present Assistant Professor, 2015–2021
previous appointments	Consultant, International Organization for Migration, Inter-American Development Bank, UNODC, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO (West Bank and Gaza, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Iraq); since 2006. Research Fellow, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb; 2008–2010. Research Fellow, World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Capacity Building in HIV/AIDS Surveillance, Zagreb, Croatia; 2007.
affiliations	Research Affiliate, New Jersey Policy Lab, Rutgers University, 2022–present. Member, Rapid Response Research Team, American Council of Chief Defenders, National Legal Aid & Defender Association, 2019–present. Member, Rutgers Center for Gender, Sexuality, Law and Policy, 2016–present. Collaborator, WHO Collaborating Centre for HIV Strategic Information, 2007–present.
education	PhD, Sociology, University of Pennsylvania, 2015. (Committee: Paul Allison, John MacDonald, Jason Schnittker (Chair), Christopher Uggen, and Christopher Wildeman) AM, Statistics, Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, 2014. MA, Sociology, University of Pennsylvania, 2012. MSc, Sociology, University of Oxford, 2008. Weidenfeld Fellow BA, Sociology, University of Zagreb, 2007 (University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, 2003–04)
certificates	Certificate in Effective College Instruction, 2023 Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) and the American Council on Education (ACE) 25-module course in effective teaching practices.
publications	<i>forthcoming & published</i> * denotes student co-author. Baćak, V., Lageson, S. & Powell, K. The stress of injustice: Public defenders and the frontline of American inequality. <i>Social Forces</i> .

- Bačak, V. (2023). Looking back: Victimization of transgender persons and the criminal legal system. *American Journal of Public Health*, 113, 10, 1043-1045.
- Bačak, V., Štulhofer, A., & Bright, K.* (2023). The role of mental health and delinquent behaviors in the cycle of sexual violence among Croatian adolescents: A longitudinal exploration with replication. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 52, 2735–2747.
- Landripet, I., Božičević, I., Bačak, V., & Štulhofer, A. (2023). Changes in sexually transmitted infections-related sexual risk-taking among young Croatian adults. *Croatian Medical Journal*, 64(3), 186-97.
- Webster, E., Powell, K., Lageson, L., & Bačak, V. (2022). “Satan’s minions” and “true believers”: How criminal defense attorneys employ quasi-religious rhetoric. *Justice Systems Journal*, 43(1), 53-67.
- Bačak, V., DeWitt, S., & Reid, S. (2022). Gang membership and mental health during the transition to adulthood. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 38, 567–596.
- Bačak, V., Wilson, L.* , & Bright, K.* (2021). Gendered association between sexual self-identification and police encounters perceived as unfair. *Annals of Epidemiology*, 63, 41-45.
- Bačak, V. & Apel, R. (2021). Police fairness and legitimacy across the post-communist divide in Europe. *Law & Society Review*, 55(3), 473-495.
- Bačak, V., Mausolf, J.* , & Schwarz, C.* (2021). How comprehensive are media-based data on police officer-involved shootings? *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 36, 55-65.
- Hyatt, J., Bačak, V., & Kerrison, E. (2021). COVID-19 vaccine refusal and related factors: Preliminary findings from a system-wide survey of correctional staff. *Federal Sentencing Reporter*, 33(4), 272–277.
- Bačak, V. & Apel, R. (2020). The thin blue line of health: Police contact and wellbeing in Europe. *Social Science & Medicine*, 267, 112404.
- Bačak, V., Bright, K.* , & Wilson, L.* (2020). Gender affirmative housing in jails and prisons. *Lancet Public Health*, 5(7), e373.
- Bačak, V. Lageson, S. E., & Powell, K.* (2020). “Fighting the good fight:” Why do public defenders remain on the job? *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 31(6), 939–961.
- Bačak, V. & Nowotny, K. M. (2020). Race and the association between police stops and depression among young adults: A research note. *Race and Justice*, 10(3), 363-375.
- Lucić, M.* , Bačak, V., & Štulhofer, A. (2020). The role of peer networks in adolescent pornography use and sexting in Croatia. *Journal of Children and Media*, 14(1), 110-127.
- Bačak, V., Andersen, L. H., & Schnittker, J. (2019). The effect of timing of incarceration on mental health: Evidence from a natural experiment. *Social Forces*, 98(1), 303–328.
- Bačak, V. & Kennedy, E. H. (2019). Principled machine learning using the Super Learner: An application to predicting prison violence. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 48(3), 698-721.

- Bačak, V. & Karim, M. E. (2019). The effect of serious offending on health: A marginal structural model. *Society and Mental Health*, 9(1), 18-32.
- Bačak, V., Thurman, K., Eyer, K., Qureshi, R., Rivera, L. M., Bird, J. D. P., & Kim, S. A. (2018) Incarceration as a health determinant for sexual orientation and gender minority persons. *American Journal of Public Health*, 108(8), 994-999. Joined by a commentary in the same issue by Kosenko and Nelson.
- Bačak, V. & Ridgeway, G. (2018). Availability of health-related programs in private and public prisons. *Journal of Correctional Health Care*, 24(1), 62-70.
- Bačak, V. (2018). Measuring inequalities in health from survey data using self-assessed social class. *Journal of Public Health*, 40(1), 183-190.
- Bačak, V. & Ólafsdóttir, S. (2017). Gender and validity of self-rated health in nineteen European countries. *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*, 45(6), 647-653.
- Štulhofer, A., Sinković, M., Božić, J., & Bačak, V. (2017). Victimization and HIV risk among Croatian female sex workers. *Violence Against Women*, 23(1), 67-88.
- Schnittker, J., & Bačak, V. (2016). Orange is still pink: Mental illness, gender roles, and physical victimization in prisons. *Society and Mental Health*, 6(1), 21-35.
- Bačak, V., & Wildeman, C. (2015). An empirical assessment of the "healthy prisoner hypothesis." *Social Science & Medicine*, 138, 187-191.
- Bačak, V., & Kennedy, E. H. (2015). Marginal structural models: An application to incarceration and marriage during young adulthood. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 77(1), 112-125.
- Schnittker, J. & Bačak, V. (2014). The increasing predictive validity of self-rated health. *PloS One*, 9(1), e84933.
- Schnittker, J. & Bačak, V. (2013). A mark of disgrace or a badge of honor? Subjective status among former inmates. *Social Problems*, 60(2), 234-254.
- Bačak, V., Laušević, D., Mugoša, B., Vratnica, Z., & Terzić, N. (2013). Hepatitis C Virus infection and related risk factors among injection drug users in Montenegro. *European Addiction Research*, 19(2), 68-73.
- Ajduković, D., Štulhofer, A., & Bačak, V. (2012). Rising popularity of anal intercourse and sexual risk taking: Findings from two national probability studies of young Croatian adults. *International Journal of STD & AIDS*, 23(11), 785-791.
- Bačak, V., & Štulhofer, A. (2012). Condom use errors and problems in a national sample of young Croatian adults. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 41(4), 995-1003.
- Štulhofer, A., & Bačak, V. (2011). Is anal sex a marker for sexual risk-taking? Results from a population-based study of young Croatian adults. *Sexual Health*, 8(3), 384-389.
- Božić, J., Bačak, V., & Štulhofer, A. (2011). Sexual conversation networks and young adults' sexual health in a Southeast-European context. *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 20(4), 167-179.

- Štulhofer, A., Šoh, D., Jelaska, N., Baćak, V., & Landripet, I. (2011). Religiosity and sexual risk behavior among Croatian college students, 1998–2008. *Journal of Sex Research*, 48(4), 360–371.
- Baćak, V., & Štulhofer, A. (2011). Masturbation among sexually active young women in Croatia: Associations with religiosity and pornography use. *International Journal of Sexual Health*, 23(4), 248–257.
- Landripet, I., Štulhofer, A., & Baćak, V. (2011). Changes in HIV and STI-related sexual risk taking among young Croatian adults: Findings from the 2005 and 2010 population-based surveys. *Croatian Medical Journal*, 52, 453–463.
- Baćak, V. (2011). The spectre of internationalization in Croatian sociology. *Croatian Sociological Review*, 41(2), 239–245.
- Štulhofer, A., Baćak, V., Ajduković, D., & Graham, C. (2010). Understanding the association between condom use at first and most recent sexual intercourse. *Social Science & Medicine*, 70(12), 2080–2084.
- Štulhofer, A., Laušević, D., Božičević, I., Baćak, V., Mugoša, B., Terzić, N., & Drglin, T. (2010). HIV risks among female sex workers in Croatia and Montenegro. *Collegium Antropologicum*, 34(3), 881–886.
- Štulhofer, A., Baćak, V., & Šuljok, A. (2010). A parochial status of Croatian sociology? *Croatian Sociological Review*, 40(1), 103–108.
- Štulhofer, A., Baćak, V., Drglin, T., Puljiz, M., & Miklin, M. (2009). Female sex work and HIV risks in Croatia. *AIDS Care*, 21(11), 1439–1446.
- Štulhofer, A., Baćak, V., Božičević, I., & Begovac, J. (2008). HIV-related sexual risk taking among HIV-negative men who have sex with men in Zagreb, Croatia. *AIDS and Behavior*, 12(3), 505–512.
- Baćak, V., & Šoh, D. (2006). On the road: Croatian truck drivers, commercial sex and HIV/AIDS. *Collegium Antropologicum*, 30(2), 99–103.

book reviews

- Schnittker, J., Massoglia, M., & Uggen, C. 2022, “Prisons and Health in the Age of Mass Incarceration,” Oxford University Press. Ismail, N. 2022, “The English Prison Health System After a Decade of Austerity, 2010–2020: The Failed Political Experiment.” Taylor & Francis. *Punishment & Society*, in press.
- Hedstrom, P. 2005, “Dissecting the Social: On the Principles of Analytical Sociology,” Cambridge University Press. *Croatian Sociological Review*, 35(3–4):231–234, 2009.
- Halkias, A. 2004, “The Empty Cradle of Democracy. Sex, Abortion, and Nationalism in Greece,” Duke University Press. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 36:868–870, 2007.

other publications

- Interviews with Jeffrey Alexander, Gary Fine, Erik Olin Wright, Susan Watkins, Matthew Salganik, and Samuel Friedman. Available by request.

Opinion pieces published in Croatian and US newspapers.

- funding New Jersey State Policy Lab, 2021, "Cannabis Legalization in New Jersey: A Baseline Study" Co-PI. \$52,750.
- Arnold Ventures, 2020, "Understanding Vaccine Hesitancy Among Incarcerated People to Develop Evidence-Based Policy in a Pandemic." Co-PI. \$68,242.
- Drug Enforcement and Policy Center, 2020, "Marijuana Legalization in New Jersey: Early Impacts on Community-Level Crime and Beliefs." Co-PI. \$84,000.
- Initiative for Multidisciplinary Research Teams (IMRT) Award, 2017, "Interdisciplinary Research Initiative on LGBTQ Inmates and Health." PI. \$157,810.
- Rutgers Grant Award in Big Data Analytics, 2017, "Understanding Systems and Outcomes of Indigent Defense using Big Data." Co-PI. \$40,000.
- Initiative for Humanities, Arts, Social Sciences, and Business Research Teams (IHASSRT) Award, 2017, "Interdisciplinary LGBTQ Health Disparities and Health Promotion Research Initiative." Co-Project Director. \$50,000.
- Rutgers University-Newark Chancellor's Strategic Seed Grant, 2016, "The Weight of Public Service: Occupational Health among Public Defenders." PI. \$60,000.
- Rutgers Research Council Award, 2016, "Using Text Mining to Analyze Reports of Officer Involved Shootings." PI. \$1,500.

- teaching *Rutgers University* (instructor):
- Comparative Crime and Criminal Justice (G), 2022, 2023
 - Comparative Criminal Justice Systems (UG), 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023¹
 - Drug Policy (UG), 2023
 - Introductory Statistics (G), 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018
 - Data Analysis in Criminal Justice (UG), 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022
 - Applied Machine Learning (G), 2019
- University of Pennsylvania* (teaching assistant):
- Criminal Justice Data Analytics (G), Instructor: Greg Ridgeway 2015
 - Drugs and Gangs (UG), Instructor: Emily Owens, 2014
 - Introduction to Sociology (UG), Instructor: Onoso Imoagene, 2013
 - Quantitative Methods II (G), Instructor: Paul Allison, 2013
 - Quantitative Methods I (G), Instructor: Paul Allison, 2012
 - Social Statistics (UG), Instructor: Hyunjoon Park, 2012
 - Quantitative Methods I (G), Instructor: Herbert Smith, 2011

Non-university teaching:

¹Course taught to incarcerated students in prison as part of the New Jersey Scholarship and Transformative Education in Prisons (NJ-STEP) initiative.

Workshops on research design, data collection, and data analysis for social epidemiological research among vulnerable populations.

advising	<p>Dissertation committee: Kathleen Powell, Ntasha Bhardwaj, Christiane Schwarz, Lauren Wilson (Chair), Ashley Appleby, Danielle Shields, Felipe Salazar Tobar, Sara Thompson, Jordan Costa, Sandy Xie.</p> <p>Empirical paper committee: Katherine Bright (Chair), Brandon Turchan, Alisa Matlin, Christiane Schwarz, Danielle Shields, Jo Kubik, Ntasha Bhardway, Sadaf Hashimi, Chase Montagnet, Ashley Appleby, Jordan Costa, Sara Thompson, Carolina Ribeiro Caliman.</p> <p>External advisor in the Advanced Data Analysis Project to PhD students in the Department of Statistics & Data Science, Carnegie Mellon University: Holly Bossart, Mateo Dulce Rubio, Shuying Shen; 2021/22; 2023.</p>
selected presentations	<p>“Cross-national variation in victimization and its consequences for sexual and gender minority populations across Europe,” American Society of Criminology, 2023.</p> <p>“Social inequalities in health and medical care in prisons: Cross-national evidence from Latin America and the Caribbean,” Inter-American Development Bank, 2023.</p> <p>“LGBTI citizenship, safety, and wellbeing in Europe,” Department of Criminal Justice, Temple University, 2023.</p> <p>“The pursuit of justice and the (too) heavy weight of public service”, <i>Public Defenders and Public Defense in Latin America and the United States: Mapping local dilemmas and opportunities for Reform</i>, Indigent Defense Research Association, 2023.</p> <p>“Police fairness and legitimacy across the post-communist divide in Europe,” Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, University of Oxford, 2023.</p> <p>“The weight of public service: Occupational stress and wellbeing among public defenders.” American Society of Criminology, 2018.</p> <p>“The effect of timing of incarceration on mental health: Evidence from a natural experiment.” New York University, Department of Sociology, 2018.</p> <p>Discussant, “Law enforcement and population processes” session. Population Association of America, 2017.</p>
training	<p>Presenting Data and Information, Instructor: Edward R. Tufte, NYC, 2019</p> <p>Causal Inference in Statistical Text Analysis, Instructor: Brandon Stewart, Department of Sociology, NYU, 2017</p> <p>Causal Inference with Directed Graphs, Instructor: Felix Elwert, Statistical Horizons, Philadelphia, 2016</p> <p>Causal Mediation Analysis, Instructor: Kosuke Imai, Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania, 2014</p>

	<p>Propensity Score Methods, Instructor: Elizabeth Stuart, Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania, 2012</p> <p>Fragile Families Workshop, Social Work, Columbia University, 2012</p> <p>Policy Analysis Workshop, RAND Europe, Cambridge, UK, 2010</p> <p>Network Analysis with Pajek, European Science Foundation, University of Ljubljana, 2009</p> <p>Youth Research Summer School, Society for Research on Adolescence, University of British Columbia, 2009</p> <p>Qualitative Comparative Analysis, Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research, University of Manchester, 2008</p>
fellowships and awards	<p>Rutgers Board of Trustees Research Fellowship for Scholarly Excellence Award, 2021</p> <p>Fulbright U.S. Scholar award, Croatia, 2020</p> <p>Mathematica Policy Research Summer Research Fellowship, 2014</p> <p>Gertrude and Otto Pollak Summer Research Fellowship, Department of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania, 2014</p> <p>Clifford Clogg Scholarship, ICPSR Summer Program, 2013</p> <p>Benjamin Franklin/Pew Presidential Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania, 2010-15</p> <p>International Fulbright Science and Technology Award, 2010</p> <p>Weidenfeld Scholarships and Leadership Programme, Oxford University, 2007</p> <p>Open Society Institute, Undergraduate Exchange Program, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, 2003</p>
service to the university	<p>School of Criminal Justice, Rutgers University, committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer Evaluation Committee Awards and School Promotion Comprehensive Exam Research and Professional Development (former Chair) Scheduling (Chair) <p>Rutgers University-wide: Limited Submission Reviewer Pool Member</p>
Editorial service	<p>Editorial board member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journal of Health and Social Behavior (2021-2023) International Journal of Sexual Health (2020-2023) Croatian Sociological Review (2015-present)
service to the profession	<p>Section Chair (Quantitative Methods) on the American Society of Criminology Annual Conference Program Committee, 2023</p> <p>Member, Awards and Mentoring Committees, Division on Queer Criminology, American Society of Criminology, 2023</p>

Member, Division of International Criminology Outstanding Book Award Committee, American Society of Criminology, 2022, 2023
 Chair, Methods Workshop Committee, American Society of Criminology, 2018-19
 Ad Hoc Committee on Mentoring, Section on Law and Deviance, American Sociological Association, 2019
 Member, Methods Workshop Committee, American Society of Criminology, 2017-18
 Organizer, interdisciplinary conference: "LGBTQ Health & Resilience: Promoting LGBTQ Health in Schools, Prisons, and the Military," Rutgers University, 2019.
 Member, Editorial Board, Croatian Sociological Review, 2009-2013.
 Editor, SANscript, Newsletter of the Sociologists AIDS Networks, 2011-14
 Co-founder & vice-president, European Sociology Students' Association, 2003-4; 2005-6

peer
review

American Journal of Sociology; American Sociological Review; American Journal of Public Health; Acta Sociologica; Aggressive Behavior; Archives of Sexual Behavior; AIDS Care; BMC Public Health; BMC Women's Health; British Medical Journal (Open); Criminology; Crime & Delinquency; Children and Youth Services Review; Demography; European Sociological Review; European Journal of Criminology; Ethnicity and Health; Health Affairs; Health & Justice; Health Services Research; International Criminal Justice Review; International Journal of Comparative Sociology; International Journal of Sexual Health; International Journal for Equity in Health; Journal of Children and Media; Journal of Adolescent Health; Journal of Computational Social Science; Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health; Journal of Experimental Criminology; Journal of Health and Social Behavior; Journal of Quantitative Criminology; Journal of Public Health; Journal of Research on Adolescence; Journal of Sex Research; Journal of Youth Studies; Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency; Justice Quarterly; Journal of Correctional Health Care; Journal of Epidemiology and Global Health; Psychology, Health, & Medicine; Kriminologie; PeerJ; Psychological Trauma; Public Opinion Quarterly; Race and Justice; Social Problems; Social Science & Medicine; Social Science Research; SSM-Population Health; Social Indicators Research; Scandinavian Journal of Public Health; Sexuality and Culture; Sexuality Research and Social Policy; Society and Mental Health; Sociology Compass; Social Currents; Social Forces; Sociological Methods & Research; Socius; Youth & Society.

Book and journal proposal reviews: Cambridge University Press; Princeton University Press; SAGE.

Grant reviewer: Croatian Science Foundation; Swiss National Science Foundation; U.S. National Science Foundation.

references

Professor Jason Schnittker, Department of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania
 Professor Paul Allison, Department of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania
 Professor Robert Apel, School of Criminal Justice, Rutgers University

Professor Shadd Maruna, School of Social Sciences, Queen's University Belfast
Professor Christopher Wildeman, Department of Sociology, Duke University
Professor Aleksandar Štulhofer, Department of Sociology, University of Zagreb