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Rutgers University,
123 Washington St.,
Newark, NJ 07102-3094.

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VALERIO BAĆAK

appointments	School of Criminal Justice, Rutgers University Associate Professor, 2021–present Assistant Professor, 2015–2021
leadership	School of Criminal Justice, Rutgers University Co-director, Strategic Hub for International Public Safety
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) Research Fellow, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb Research Fellow, World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Capacity Building in HIV/AIDS Surveillance, School of Public Health, University of Zagreb
affiliations	New Jersey State Policy Lab, Rutgers University Suraksha Lens, South Asian Institute of Crime and Justice Studies Rutgers Center for Gender, Sexuality, Law and Policy
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.

forthcoming *denotes student co-author

- and published articles Baćak, V. The gendered burden of visibility: Government responses to safety and public intimacy among sexual minorities in Europe. *Social Problems*.
- Baćak, V., Clepper, C., & *Scott, H. Connecting the belonging and growth mindset research with college teaching in prison. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*.
- Baćak, V. & *Bright, K. Between a rock and a hard place: Coping with minority stress in American jails and prisons. *Corrections: Policy, Practice, and Research*.
- Baćak, V. & *Ben-David, N. (2026). Suicidal ideation among transgender and nonbinary persons and country-level support for transgender rights in the European Union: A cross-national study. *American Journal of Public Health*, 116(8), 1189-1197.
- *Dulce Rubio, M., Kennedy, E. Baćak, V., & Nagin, D. (2025). Effects of adolescent victimization on offending: Flexible methods for missing data and unmeasured confounding. *Annals of Applied Statistics*, 19(2), 889-906.
- Jurin, T., Koletić, G., Baćak, V., & Štulhofer, A. (2025). Distressing sexual difficulties and sexual victimization in emerging Croatian adults. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 40(3), 630-643.
- Baćak, V., Lageson, S. & Powell, K. (2024). The stress of injustice: Public defenders and the frontline of American inequality. *Social Forces*, soae027, 1-18.
- Baćak, V. (2023). Looking back: Victimization of transgender persons and the criminal legal system. *American Journal of Public Health*, 113(10), 1043-1045.
- Baćak, 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(7), 2735-2747.
- Landripet, I., Božičević, I., Baćak, 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., & Baćak, V. (2022). "Satan's minions" and "true believers": How criminal defense attorneys employ quasi-religious rhetoric. *Justice Systems Journal*, 43(1), 53-67.
- Baćak, V., DeWitt, S., & Reid, S. (2022). Gang membership and mental health during the transition to adulthood. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 38, 567-596.
- Baćak, V., * Wilson, L., & * Bright, K. (2021). Gendered association between sexual self-identification and police encounters perceived as unfair. *Annals of Epidemiology*, 63, 41-45.
- Baćak, V. & Apel, R. (2021). Police fairness and legitimacy across the post-communist divide in Europe. *Law & Society Review*, 55(3), 473-495.
- Baćak, 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., Baćak, 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.
- Baćak, V. & Apel, R. (2020). The thin blue line of health: Police contact and wellbeing in Europe. *Social Science & Medicine*, 267, 112404.
- Baćak, V., * Bright, K., & * Wilson, L. (2020). Gender affirmative housing in jails and prisons. *Lancet Public Health*, 5(7), e373.
- Baćak, 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.
- Baćak, 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., Baćak, 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.
- Baćak, 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.
- Baćak, 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.
- Baćak, V. & Karim, M. E. (2019). The effect of serious offending on health: A marginal structural model. *Society and Mental Health*, 9(1), 18–32.
- Baćak, 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.
- Baćak, V. & Ridgeway, G. (2018). Availability of health-related programs in private and public prisons. *Journal of Correctional Health Care*, 24(1), 62–70.
- Baćak, V. (2018). Measuring inequalities in health from survey data using self-assessed social class. *Journal of Public Health*, 40(1), 183–190.
- Baćak, 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., & Baćak, V. (2017). Victimization and HIV risk among Croatian female sex workers. *Violence Against Women*, 23(1), 67–88.
- Schnittker, J., & Baćak, V. (2016). Orange is still pink: Mental illness, gender roles, and physical victimization in prisons. *Society and Mental Health*, 6(1), 21–35.
- Baćak, V., & Wildeman, C. (2015). An empirical assessment of the "healthy prisoner hypothesis." *Social Science & Medicine*, 138, 187–191.
- Baćak, 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. & Baćak, V. (2014). The increasing predictive validity of self-rated health. *PloS One*, 9(1), e84933.
- Schnittker, J. & Baćak, V. (2013). A mark of disgrace or a badge of honor? Subjective status among former inmates. *Social Problems*, 60(2), 234-254.
- Baćak, 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., & Baćak, 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.
- Baćak, 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., & Baćak, 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., Baćak, 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 O'Donnell, I. (2023). *Prison Life: Pain, Resistance, and Purpose*, New York University Press. *International Criminology*, 4(3), 312-31.
- 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*, 27(2), 399-402.
- 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.
- reports Baćak, V. (2023). Inequalities in health and medical care in prisons: Cross-national evidence from Latin America and the Caribbean. Inter-American Development Bank.
- Baćak, V. and *Bowling, J. (2022). Cannabis and law enforcement in New Jersey. New Jersey State Policy Lab.
- Hyatt, J., Baćak, V., Kerrison, E., & *Greberman, E. (2021). Staff perceptions of incentives for COVID vaccination. Pennsylvania Department of Corrections.
- * Wilson, L., *Bright, K., & Baćak, V. (2020). Experiences and perceptions of public safety among justice-involved LGBTQ persons. Newark Public Safety Collaborative.
- Baćak, V. and Dominković, Z. (2012). Behavioral and biological surveillance study among injection drug users in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Institute of Public Health Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina.
- Baćak, V. (2011). Homophobia in Southeastern Europe: prevalence, consequences, and prevention. United Nations Development Programme.
- funding New Jersey State Policy Lab, 2025, "A Preliminary Evaluation of the ARRIVE Together Program in New Jersey" PI. \$13,650.
- 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):

Criminal Justice Policy (G), 2024, 2025

Comparative Crime and Criminal Justice (G), 2022, 2023

Comparative Criminal Justice Systems (UG), 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023¹, 2025

Drug Policy (UG), 2023, 2024, 2025

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:

Workshops on epidemiological research design, data collection, and survey analysis for the World Health Organization and UNICEF, 2006-2012.

advising

Dissertation committee: Kathleen Powell, Ntasha Bhardwaj, Christiane Schwarz, Lauren Wilson (Chair), Ashley Appleby, Danielle Shields, Felipe Salazar Tobar, Sara Thompson, Jordan Costa, Sandy Xie, Ihsan Al-Zouabi, Carolina Ribeiro Caliman, Ryan Alonzo Smith, Isabella Polito, Sarah Marks (Chair), Jordan DiTullio.

Empirical paper committee: Katherine Bright (Chair), Brandon Turchan, Alisa Matlin, Christiane Schwarz, Danielle Shields, Jo Kubik, Ntasha Bhardway, Sadaf Hashimi,

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

Chase Montagnet, Ashley Appleby, Jordan Costa, Sara Thompson, Carolina Ribeiro Caliman, Jordan DiTullio, Sarah Marks (Chair), Morgan McMains-Nurisio, Penelope Lowe, Ryan Alonzo Smith, Álvaro Pretel

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, Jung Ho Lee; 2021-present.

selected
presentations

- “Statewide effort to improve encounters between police and people in mental health crisis,” British Society of Criminology, Nottingham Trent University, 2026.
- “Minority stress in jails and prisons,” European Society of Criminology – Prison Working Group, University of Vienna, 2026.
- “Violence interruption programs in Latin America and the Caribbean: Looking back and looking forward,” American Society of Criminology, 2025.
- “Cross-national variation in victimization and its consequences for sexual and gender minority populations across Europe,” American Society of Criminology, 2023.
- “Social inequalities in health and medical care in prisons: Cross-national evidence from Latin America and the Caribbean,” Inter-American Development Bank, 2023.
- “LGBTI citizenship, safety, and wellbeing in Europe,” Department of Criminal Justice, Temple University, 2023.
- “The pursuit of justice and the (too) heavy weight of public service”, *Public Defenders and Public Defense in Latin America and the United States: Mapping local dilemmas and opportunities for Reform*, Indigent Defense Research Association, 2023.
- “Police fairness and legitimacy across the post-communist divide in Europe,” Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, University of Oxford, 2023.
- “The weight of public service: Occupational stress and wellbeing among public defenders.” American Society of Criminology, 2018.
- “The effect of timing of incarceration on mental health: Evidence from a natural experiment.” New York University, Department of Sociology, 2018.
- Discussant, “Law enforcement and population processes” session. Population Association of America, 2017.

training

- Mentoring Matters, P3 Collaboratory, Rutgers University-Newark, 2024.
- Presenting Data and Information, Instructor: Edward R. Tufte, NYC, 2019
- Causal Inference in Statistical Text Analysis, Instructor: Brandon Stewart, Department of Sociology, NYU, 2017
- Causal Inference with Directed Graphs, Instructor: Felix Elwert, Statistical Horizons, Philadelphia, 2016
- Causal Mediation Analysis, Instructor: Kosuke Imai, Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania, 2014

	Propensity Score Methods, Instructor: Elizabeth Stuart, Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania, 2012
	Fragile Families Workshop, Social Work, Columbia University, 2012
	Policy Analysis Workshop, RAND Europe, Cambridge, UK, 2010
	Network Analysis with Pajek, European Science Foundation, University of Ljubljana, 2009
	Youth Research Summer School, Society for Research on Adolescence, University of British Columbia, 2009
	Qualitative Comparative Analysis, Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research, University of Manchester, 2008
fellowships and awards	Chancellor's Scholar-in-Residence Fellowship, Rutgers University, 2023-24 Rutgers Board of Trustees Research Fellowship for Scholarly Excellence Award, 2021 Fulbright U.S. Scholar award, Croatia, 2020 Mathematica Policy Research Summer Research Fellowship, 2014 Gertrude and Otto Pollak Summer Research Fellowship, Department of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania, 2014 Clifford Clogg Scholarship, ICPSR Summer Program, 2013 Benjamin Franklin/Pew Presidential Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania, 2010-15 International Fulbright Science and Technology Award, 2010 Weidenfeld Scholarships and Leadership Programme, Oxford University, 2007 Open Society Institute, Undergraduate Exchange Program, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, 2003
service to the university	School of Criminal Justice, Rutgers University, committees: Rutgers University-Newark Faculty Council Peer Evaluation Committee Awards and School Promotion Comprehensive Exam Research and Professional Development (Chair 2022, 2024-present) Scheduling (Chair 2022-2024) Rutgers University-wide: Limited Submission Reviewer Pool Member
editorial boards	Law & Society Review (2026-present) Croatian Sociological Review (2015-present) Journal of Health and Social Behavior (2021-2023) International Journal of Sexual Health (2020-2023)
service to the profession	Peer Reviewer, Fulbright United States Scholar Program award, 2026 Chair, Student Paper Award Committee, Division of International Criminology, American Society of Criminology, 2026

Member, Emerging Scholar Award Committees, Division on Queer Criminology, American Society of Criminology, 2026
 Advisory Board member, Suraksha Lens–A Climate–Exploitation Risk Intelligence Initiative, South Asian Institute of Crime and Justice Studies, 2026-2028
 Member, Sellin-Glueck Award Committee, American Society of Criminology, 2024
 Section Chair (Quantitative Methods) on the American Society of Criminology Annual Conference Program Committee, 2023
 Member, Awards and Mentoring Committees, Division on Queer Criminology, American Society of Criminology, 2023
 Member, Outstanding Book Award Committee, Division of International Criminology, 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; Criminology & Public Policy; Crime & Delinquency; Criminal Justice Policy Review; Children and Youth Services Review; Demography; Deviant Behavior; European Sociological Review; European Journal of Criminology; Ethnicity and Health; Health Affairs; Health & Justice; Health Services Research; International Criminology; 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 Criminal Justice Education; 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; Law & Social Inquiry; Psychological Trauma; Policing & Society; 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; Routledge.

Grant reviewer: Croatian Science Foundation; University of Zagreb, Swiss National Science Foundation; U.S. National Science Foundation.