Australian National University

DISTINGUISHED LECTURE

Early Career Transitions in STEM Employment: Processes Shaping Retention and Satisfaction

Tuesday 3 July
6-7pm

Speaker

Professor Sharon Sassler
Dept of Policy Analysis & Management
Cornell University, U.S.A.

Location

Theatrette (2.02)
Sir Roland Wilson Building #120
120 McCoy Circuit, ANU

A reception in the foyer will follow the lecture

Registration requested

https://sassler-anu.eventbrite.com.au

This distinguished lecture is free and open to the public

The need for STEM workers in the United States (and elsewhere) is expected to grow at or above the national growth rate over the next decade (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2012). Furthermore, governments have focused a good deal of attention on increasing the presence of women and underrepresented minorities in STEM fields. The science and technology labour force has already diversified in important ways over the past few decades. Women's representation in science and technology education and employment has increased significantly, though their representation remains considerably smaller in fields such as engineering and computer science. Contemporary debates about the STEM labour force centre around claims that there is both a shortage of trained workers for the scientific and technical needs of employers, and that this shortage could be ameliorated with increased numbers of women and minorities trained in STEM disciplines. Drawing on several works in progress, I present results suggesting that in most STEM fields, transitions into the STEM labour force have narrowed, but that women and minorities continue to experience employment in STEM jobs differently than do men. Results are drawn from quantitative and qualitative projects of mid-career and recent STEM graduates.

Sharon Sassler is Professor in the Department of Policy Analysis and Management (PAM) at Cornell University. As a social demographer, Sassler's research examines factors shaping the activities of young adults and their life course transitions into school and work, relationships, and parenthood, and how these transitions vary by gender, race/ethnicity, and social class.

Her published research on family demography explores various facets of contemporary relationships, assessing whether marital or cohabiting unions are associated with the health of single mothers; how children born to unmarried parents fare with regards to their educational outcomes; as well as research on how cohabiting unions progress into marriage, parenthood, or dissolution. Her recently published (2017) book, *Cohabitation Nation: Gender, Class, and the Remaking of Relationships*, examines how cohabitation is contributing to growing levels of family inequality in the United States. A second stream of her work examines the retention and advancement of women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) occupations, examining transitions into and retention in STEM jobs, as well as the gender wage gap in STEM.

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