



EXPANDING PERSPECTIVES OF DISASTER SCIENCE AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

FRIDAY: PLENARY SPEAKER

SPEAKER

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SESSION ABSTRACT

The advantages of interdisciplinary research are often talked about in glowing terms, but where are the true stories of the challenges and struggles of doing this work? Why is the picture painted one that is so pretty? What are the realities of working through differences of perspective, of training, of methodological approach, of theory? Why would a sociologist be working in an engineering laboratory?!

This talk will provide a view into the complicated space of interdisciplinary research by highlighting examples from the speaker's work in the spaces of community resilience and disaster recovery. Increasingly, the federal government is working in the area of resilience with an emphasis on both natural and technological disasters (e.g., the Presidential Policy Directive on Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience). Much of this work is interdisciplinary and includes social scientists alongside physical, environmental, and climate scientists, engineers, planners, state and local managers, and a wide range of decision makers. The reason for this trend is explained, in part, by the recognition that societal well-being is the ultimate goal in preparing for and responding to disaster events. This goal demands participation and even further, the true collaboration of many partners.

This talk will expose the significant challenges encountered alongside the beneficial outcomes that arise when disciplines and perspectives are integrated. The results of this integration are as important for research as for practice. In a time where differences have led to deep divides, it is essential to seek ways to bridge the gaps in our understanding of society, to seek out mechanisms for improving equity, and to find ways to enhance the ability of all communities to prepare for and respond to hazards events.