Call for Papers

Decreasing Recidivism: 1st International Conference

Exploring Sustainable Strategies for Decreasing Recidivism through Interdisciplinary Research

Baltimore
June 17-19, 2018

Vulnerable populations are confronted with wicked problems for which social scientists and policy makers have struggled to design effective sustainable solutions. Vulnerable population groups such as ex-offenders, homeless, veterans, and chemically-dependent persons confront a myriad of colliding barriers to successful re-entry into society. Colliding barriers such as inadequate housing options, unsustainable employment, unreliable transportation, untreated mental health challenges, improper childcare, and poor self-esteem block the successful reintegration in the community, and as such, become contributing factors to higher rates of recidivism. Conceived as the tendency to relapse into a previous condition or mode of behavior, recidivism is a perfect example of a wicked public policy issue not fully understood because of its multidimensional nature.

The purpose of the 1st International Conference on Decreasing Recidivism is to explore the root causes and various dimensions – political, economic, social, spiritual, and cultural – that must be taken into consideration while devising concrete strategies to tackle recidivism effectively. Specifically, the conference will bring together an international group of scholars and practitioners from diverse disciplines (economics, sociology, public administration, political science, public policy, criminal justice, social work, business, anthropology, law, psychology, psychiatry, information technology, journalism, education, public/mental health, etc.) to collectively explore the multiple facets of the problems and emerging opportunities of decreasing recidivism locally and around the world. In their papers, conference participants can address numerous themes and issues, such as:

Innovative Evidence-based Approaches and Recidivism Reduction
What are some evidence-based pragmatic approaches that have proved to be effective in helping ex-offenders and other individuals struggling with addictive behaviours to not relapse into their previous conditions?

Challenges Confronting Mentally Ill Inmates
What best practices have been identified to help inmates suffering from mental illnesses? Besides incarceration, what other alternatives to correct the behaviours of mentally ill offenders should be considered? Are incarcerated mentally ill youth and young adults likely to have an educational disability?

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Ex-Offenders Reintegration
Is there empirical evidence of civil society, non-profit and non-governmental organizations playing an advocacy role for effective reintegration of returning citizens? Have CSOs been effective in reaching ex-offenders and other individuals struggling with addictive behaviours?

Lawmaking and Social Justice
Could the elimination of state/local government laws that prevent ex-offenders from getting jobs be a cost-effective strategy and long-term solution? From a fiscal responsibility perspective, are tax-dollars best used with short and long-term incarcerations? Are there empirical evidence supporting the effectiveness of being tough on crime and mass incarcerations?

Faith-based Organizations and Recidivism Reduction Efforts
Looking at post-incarceration, is there empirical evidence of long-term positive impacts of prison ministries? In other words, do inmates getting spiritual counselling relapse less than others? Are spiritual leaders involving their memberships in mentoring ex-offenders and other individuals struggling with addictive behaviours?

Academic Institutions and Social Equity
Is there evidence of moving from research to policy and best practices to improve the lives of ex-offenders and other individuals struggling with addictive behaviours? What are some of the tested theories which practitioners could rely upon while designing concrete strategies for reducing recidivism? Could embracing an interdisciplinary action research paradigm lead to better strategies to reducing recidivism? What are the best benchmarks for performance measurement in assessing recidivism reduction efforts?

Corporate Social Responsibility and Job Creation
Could Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) provide long-term employment solutions to ex-offenders and other individuals struggling with addictive behaviours? From a corporate social responsibility perspective, what are the threats and opportunities of improving college and career readiness for individuals at pre-incarceration, incarceration, and post-incarceration stages?

Community Corrections Centers (CCCs) and Contract Facilities (CCFs)
Is there empirical evidence supporting the relevance of CCCs and CCFs in reducing recidivism? Is it in the best interest of CCFs to foster recidivism reduction strategies? What are the pros and cons of the current trend toward prison privatizations?

Educational and Vocational Needs for Incarcerated Youth
Whose responsibility is it for meeting the educational and vocational needs of youth and young adults in the juvenile justice system? Are there effective educational and vocational services

being made available to them? Are juvenile correctional agencies and public education agencies working together to ensure that these youth transition smoothly to a community-based educational or vocational setting after release from incarceration?

Submission of Paper and Panel Proposals

The conference program committee welcomes the submission of proposals for individual papers, professional workshops and fully formed panels. High-quality conceptual, theoretical, empirical, and policy- and practice-oriented research is welcome. All proposals should: (1) briefly explain how the paper, workshop or panel connects to the overall conference theme, (2) note the individual conference track in which the proposal best fits, (3) include 3-4 keywords, and (4) provide complete contact information for the corresponding individual. Proposals for individual papers or workshops should include an abstract of 250-400 words. Proposals for fully formed panels should consist of three to four complementary papers and include an abstract of 400-600 words. Review of paper, workshop and panel proposal submissions will begin on **December 1, 2017 and continue through February 16, 2018**. Proposals will be evaluated by the program committee and notifications of decisions will be made via email on or before **March 25, 2018**. Proposals should be emailed to the program committee chairs, Dr. Gedeon M. Mudacumura (gmudacumura@cheyney.edu) and Dr. Heather Wyatt-Nichol (hwyatt-nichol@ubalt.edu).

Publication Opportunity

Conference participants are encouraged to submit their full papers for consideration of inclusion in an edited book. All submissions will be peer reviewed. Further details about the publication opportunity will be provided by **April 15, 2018**.

Conference Organizers

This conference is being organized by the Interdisciplinary Action Research Centers (IARC) in partnership with the University of Baltimore, College of Public Affairs.

IARC provides vulnerable adults with resources to successfully reintegrate into society as active, productive citizens by designing comprehensive community mentoring programs for ex-offenders and other vulnerable groups such as veterans, homeless, and chemically-dependent persons.

Through their teaching, research and public service activities, the College of Public Affairs' three distinct schools (Criminal Justice, Health & Human Services, Public and International Affairs) educate tomorrow's leaders, inform public policymakers and improve the management effectiveness and operational efficiency of both public and nonprofit organizations. We prepare problem solvers who will analyze policy and lead public, nonprofit, health-care, and third sector organizations of the future.

Conference Venue

The conference will take place at the University of Baltimore, College of Public Affairs in Baltimore. Information on registration, travel, and accommodations will be provided in the near future.