



IRLE

Institute for
Research on
Labor and
Employment

“ *Research institutes such as IRLE provide the public, and those who serve the public interest, with access to the finest research and policy advice. IRLE's innovative research, education and outreach programs demonstrate that with sound public policy to support labor and employment, we can do much more to build an America that works for everyone.* ”

- Chancellor Robert A. Birgeneau

*Providing Innovative Academic Research
and Outreach on Public Policy Issues*



About the Institute for Research on Labor and Employment

The Institute for Research on Labor and Employment (IRLE) was founded by an act of the California Legislature in 1945. IRLE's mission is to advance research, education and service on all topics that intersect with work and employment. IRLE provides research support and other assistance to UC Berkeley faculty, and acts as an intellectual home for multi-disciplinary approaches to economic, social and policy issues. IRLE program centers conduct innovative strategic research on pressing public issues, and provide a wide array of outreach programs that support workplace practices. IRLE also administers external funding from foundations, government agencies and other groups.

“IRLE is the premier research institution in California focusing on work, labor and employment. It is also unique in reaching out to and working with the full range of constituencies concerned with workplace issues: scholars, students, labor, business, community, policy makers, and other practitioners.”

- Michael Reich, Director, IRLE and Professor of Economics, UC Berkeley

Pragmatic, Cutting Edge Research: A Pressing Need for Policy Makers

The public policy community has a growing need for forward-looking research that offers and appraises pragmatic solutions. In response to this need, IRLE has launched ambitious new initiatives focusing on health care and work, on the green economy, and on global labor trends. In all its activities, IRLE gives high priority to practical approaches. As a result, IRLE has developed strong ties with policy makers both in the United States and beyond.

A Multidisciplinary Approach

IRLE has been multi-disciplinary since its formation, drawing together faculty members from over a dozen disciplines. Over 80 UC Berkeley faculty members are affiliated with IRLE; they represent the full spectrum of academic departments, disciplines and schools, including:

- Agricultural and Resource Economics
- City and Regional Planning
- College of Engineering
- Economics
- Education
- Geography
- Goldman School of Public Policy
- Haas School of Business
- History
- Law (Boalt Hall)
- Sociology
- Political Science
- Psychology
- School of Public Health
- University of California Energy Institute

Program Centers

IRLE's program centers partner with the University with its community and the state of California; with research colleagues around the globe; and with policy makers who face real-world issues. The breadth of IRLE's mission enables it to focus deeply on employment issues as they intersect with other forces, such as the emergent "green economy" and employment trends such as off-shoring and immigration.

UC BERKELEY The **Center for Labor Research and Education (Labor Center)** is IRLE's largest program. The Labor Center conducts ground-breaking research on work and employment, particularly in the areas of health care, labor-management cooperation, and the global economy. It sponsors student internships and hosts high profile speakers and conferences. Its publications have attracted national attention, particularly with respect to topics such as African American workers, "big box" employers, the City of San Francisco's health care initiative, and the green economy.
Chair: Ken Jacobs <http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu>

The IRLE Centers

Center for Labor Economics

Director: David Card
<http://irle.berkeley.edu/cle/>

Center for Labor Research and Education

Chair: Ken Jacobs
<http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu>

Center for Culture, Organizations and Politics

Chair: Neil Fligstein
<http://irle.berkeley.edu/culture/>

California Public Employee Relations

Editor: Carol Vendrillo
<http://cper.berkeley.edu>

California Studies Center

Chair: Richard Walker
<http://irle.berkeley.edu/californiastudies/>

Center for the Study of Child Care Employment

Director: Marcy Whitebook
<http://irle.berkeley.edu/cscce>

Center for Work, Technology and Society

Director: Clair Brown
<http://irle.berkeley.edu/worktech>

Center on Wage and Employment Dynamics

Chair: Michael Reich
<http://irle.berkeley.edu/cwed>

Interdisciplinary Immigration Workshop

Chair: Irene Bloemraad
<http://irle.berkeley.edu/immigration>

The Labor Project for Working Families

Chair: Netsy Firestein
<http://www.working-families.org>

Vial Center on Employment in the Green Economy

Chair: Michael Reich
<http://www.irle.berkeley.edu/vial>

Work and Health Initiative

Chair: Julianne Sum
<http://irle.berkeley.edu/whi>

DONALD VIAL CENTER

on **EMPLOYMENT**
in the **green**
ECONOMY

<http://irle.berkeley.edu/vial>

The **Vial Center** provides a venue for innovative research, education and outreach on the emerging green economy and climate change policy in California, as these relate to employment issues in the state. The Center will develop joint programs and projects with other climate and economy-related research centers on the Berkeley campus. Its advisory board brings together distinguished academics, environmental advocates, regulators, community groups, employers, and unions to foster collaboration in improving the quality of jobs in the green economy.

Chair: Michael Reich



Photo by Brian Kusler

The **IRLE Library** provides expert research support and also collects both books and digital media. It has digitized several collections of historical documents, including trade union contracts, historical records of labor history, and extensive research guides. The Library also publishes *IRLE eNews*, an electronic newsletter that reports on IRLE activities.

Director: Terence K. Huwe
<http://irle.berkeley.edu/library>



The Library Commons is used for a wide variety of events in addition to study and research.

Faculty Research:

IRLE directly supports the research activities of several dozen UC Berkeley professors. The faculty are keenly interested in connecting rigorous study and analysis with real-world challenges. This bias for collaborative, solutions-based research has accelerated in the past 15 years; it is now common for economists, sociologists, geographers and others to work together to discover new approaches to regional and national-level policy challenges. Many faculty are expert on the global economy, job quality trends in the U.S., labor-management issues, the green economy, the evolving U.S. economy, and employer-health care issues.

Healthcare and Employment

Professor Jacob Hacker (Political Science) has analyzed alternative policies for extending health care to all Americans. Professor William H. Dow (Public Health) has conducted extensive studies on the interplay between employer-paid health care and the longterm needs of families. He has also collaborated with IRLE in assessing the City of San Francisco's innovative policies on universal access to health care and on mandating paid sick days for all employees.



Focusing on Today's Policy Challenges



“ UC Berkeley has a terrific group of labor economists and labor scholars. When labor economists analyze issues, we strive to learn everything there is to know about something like unemployment insurance or the welfare system - not just conceptual things, but all the details. Our focus will be on the data, first and foremost, and on the institutional features that matter. Our models are useful because they are close to the data and aren't wildly inconsistent with long-run trends or well-known facts. IRLE has been instrumental in supporting our work.”

- David Card, Chair, IRLE Center for Labor Economics and Professor of Economics, UC Berkeley



Understanding Jobs, Industry and Economy

Many faculty follow industry trends over long periods, providing policy makers with hard-hitting, fact-based analysis that can be applied to current issues. Professor Clair Brown (Economics) has been funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to study the semiconductor industry for more than 10 years—charting its international growth as well as its American roots. Professor Brown and colleagues are also exploring the green economy, which has its epicenter in the San Francisco Bay Area.
Center for Work, Technology and Society: <http://irle.berkeley.edu/worktech>

Business and Employees, Wages and Jobs

Professor Sean Farhang (Goldman School of Public Policy) studies how regulation of the workplace often depends upon the results of litigation—which in turn involves Congress, the courts and government agencies. Professor Emmanuel Saez (Economics) has studied the effects of tax incentives on firms and employees, as well as the relationship between taxation and retirement planning. Professor Michael Reich (Economics) leads a research team that has explored the impact of “living wage” and minimum wage policies across the nation, as well as the role of low-wage work, “big box” employers, and longer-term wage trends.

Minimum Wage Research at IRLE:
<http://irle.berkeley.edu/research/minimumwage.html>

New Faculty Initiatives



Low-Wage Labor Markets

IRLE publishes ongoing studies of low-wage work and other labor market issues, and has played an important national role in providing solid research on the related issue of "living wage" policies. The **Center on Wage and Employment Dynamics (CWED)** conducts studies of such diverse issues as employee "tipping" and wage policies, "big box" employers, and the impact of low wage work on local economies. CWED Chair Michael Reich and Labor Center Chair Ken Jacobs have published policy briefings for the California legislature covering overtime pay regulations. Ph.Ds on IRLE staff, including Sylvia Allegretto, Arin Dube, John Logan, Steven Pitts and Carol Zabin, have produced numerous issue briefs that have influenced public policy.

As social and workforce issues evolve, IRLE has added new areas of study to its research portfolio.

The Global Economy and U.S. Workers

The U.S. economy is completely interlinked with the global economy, which is increasingly tilting toward Asia and South Asia. This affects U.S. citizens and workers, creating both tremendous opportunities and an increased need for solid information. A group of faculty members and staff including Peter Evans (Sociology) and Katie Quan (The Labor Center) are studying how the global economy affects U.S. workers, immigration policies and industries.

“*Global labor markets suggest the need for a global response from labor. To address this need, the Berkeley IRLE convenes international stakeholders in dialogue about common interests and generates research on joint labor strategies. In particular the IRLE has developed expertise on labor movements in China and the Pacific Rim, and has sponsored numerous projects that bridge relationships between U.S., Asian, and Latin American labor representatives.*”

- Katie Quan, Director, Associate Chair, The Labor Center

and Ongoing Projects

Green Jobs and the Green Economy

California has been a leader in planning for an environmentally sustainable future for over 35 years. This activist approach sets the stage for new initiatives that are influencing national policy on many levels. At the same time, California's experience with the "green movement" has created a measurable historical record—and solid data—that can guide policy makers who must respond to the threats of global warming and the need for environmental protection. Professors Peter Berck and David Roland-Holst (Agricultural and Resource Economics) have been studying the economic benefits California's regulatory strategies, particularly with respect to the creation of new jobs and new industries. On the UC Berkeley campus, IRLE's Vial Center on Employment in the Green Economy has become a catalyst for bringing together researchers across the campus.



Photo by Azhar Elmiza



Professor Irene Bloemraad giving a talk on immigration issues at IRLE in 2008

Immigration Research: A Campus-Wide Network

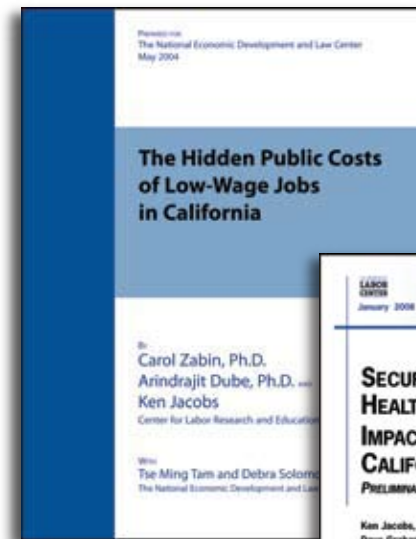
In September 2003, IRLE affiliate Professor Irene Bloemraad (Sociology) established the Interdisciplinary Immigration Workshop. While the Berkeley campus is home to numerous individuals with an expertise on immigration and a few area centers with an interest in migrants from a specific region, there was no single forum to bring together scholars of migration and immigrant integration. The Workshop was founded to provide such a venue and to serve as a forum for intense, personalized discussion of members' current research project. Professor Bloemraad has published *Becoming a Citizen: Incorporating Immigrants and Refugees in the United States and Canada* (University of California Press, 2006) and sponsors conference that showcase new student research on immigration issues.

Research Support Activities,

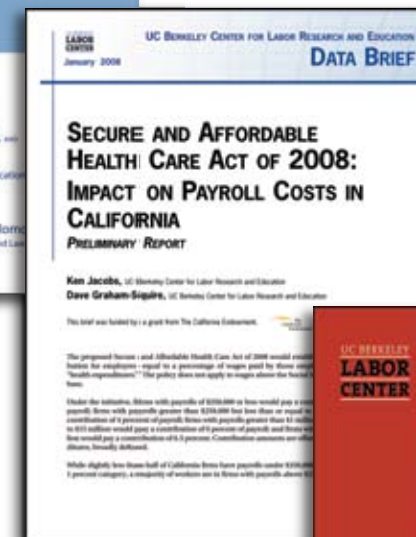
IRLE publishes a wide variety of print and digital policy briefs, reports, articles, and working papers. Its web site is one of the most visited on the UC Berkeley campus, and it serves hundreds of thousands of full text download requests per year. IRLE also publishes the premier peer-reviewed scholarly journal in its field: *Industrial Relations: A Journal of Economy and Society*.

Publications and Conferences

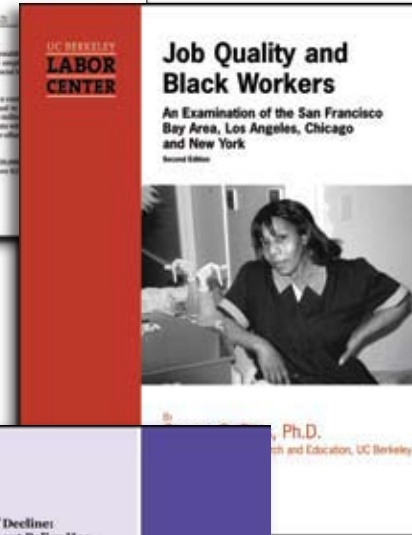
Selected Policy Briefs



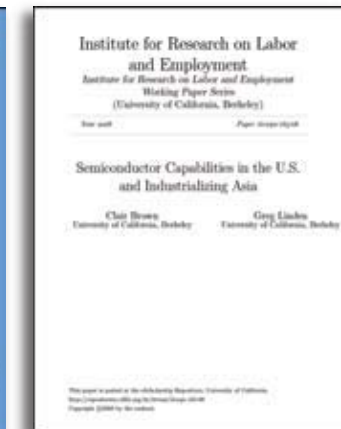
IRLE's policy briefs are practical and based on solid research.



Many of IRLE's program centers publish policy briefs and reports.



The Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) identifies IRLE's journal as the most frequently cited journal in its field.



The IRLE Working Paper Series, along with program center working papers, attract hundreds of thousands of full-text downloads per year.



California Public Employee Relations is the leading journal in its field.

Conferences, Colloquia and Guest Lectures

IRLE sponsors a full schedule of conferences, colloquia and distinguished guest speakers each academic year. The following events and presenters illustrate the breadth of topics that are addressed.

"New Labor Market Institutions and the Public Policy Response: A Symposium to Honor Lloyd Ulman," with over 100 participants from around the globe.
"Kaiser Permanente Management/Labor Conference." Attended by 80 management, labor, business and public leaders and academics
IRLE's 60th Anniversary Symposium, which covered globalization, immigration, labor movement, and public policy. Faculty presenters represented the entire campus community; 120 attendees, and the event was podcast.

Colloquium Series: Recent Presenters

David Roland-Holst, Professor of Agricultural and Resource Economics, UC Berkeley: *"Climate Action, Energy Efficiency, and Job Creation in California"*
Will Dow, Professor, Health Economics, UC Berkeley: *"Pay-or-play employer health insurance mandates: Early evidence from San Francisco"*
Lori Kletzer, Professor of Economics, UC Santa Cruz: *"Measuring the Task Content of Offshorable Services Jobs, Tradable Services and Job Loss"*
Irene Bloemraad, Professor, Sociology, UC Berkeley: *"Do Immigrants Hurt Civic and Political Engagement? The Conditional Effects of Immigrant Diversity on Trust, Membership and Participation across 19 Countries, 1981-2000"*

Distinguished Guest Lecturers

Van Jones, Founding President of Green For All, Senior Fellow with the Center for American Progress: *"The Green Collar Economy"*
Holmes Hummel, UC Energy Resources Group, visiting specialist on Climate and Energy Policy Design: *"What is at stake for labor interests in climate policy design – and what can they win at the table?"*
Chris Tilly, Professor of Urban Planning and Director, IRLE, UCLA: *"Wal-Mart and beyond: How national institutions shape retail jobs around the world"*



The IRLE Web is a portal to its all of its research output, activities and news.



The IRLE Library publishes blogs covering labor and economic news, immigration news and a monthly electronic newsletter, *IRLE eNews*.



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California Endowment
Rockefeller Foundation
Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
Open Society Institute
California Wellness Foundation
Russell Sage Foundation
San Francisco Foundation

Government Agencies

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National Institute of Mental Health
U.S. Department of State
California Department of Industrial Relations



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