



CRISP Newsletter

Center for Research on Inclusion & Social Policy

DECEMBER 2019



CRISP Evaluation Clinic

Results matter—but compiling and showcasing those results can be challenging in the nonprofit world. Donors often expect to see how their investment dollars were used. Organizations want to ensure they're producing promising results to justify existing efforts and expansion, and their staff wants to know their hard work is having an impact on the issues and populations they're passionate about.

Yet, many smaller organizations lack the staffing, time, and/or expertise to conduct even small analyses of internal data, client experiences, or community engagement. Rather than investing in an outside agency to handle data assessment, many groups—driven by dedication to their mission—opt to funnel their funding toward their services instead.

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To help nonprofits overcome these obstacles, CRISP is launching the new CRISP Evaluation Clinic in spring 2020. The clinic provides low- to no-cost research and evaluation services to nonprofit organizations working with diverse populations and addressing issues of equity and/or social policy. Its work can help organizations with program development, capacity building, analyzing program effectiveness, and understanding client, community, and stakeholder participation and engagement.

CRISP recognizes the complexity of social policy issues and knows that addressing them requires expertise in multiple areas. For example, organizations that deal with issues of poverty also must understand housing, criminal justice, race, substance abuse, and mental health, among other issues. That's why participating groups are partnered with a diverse team of service-minded student researchers who put their skills and experience to work for nonprofits in need. Their efforts can help organizations gain a clearer picture of their work which can bolster both internal decision-making and external fund development.

The clinic addresses the needs of diverse, at-risk communities in multiple ways. The projects the clinic aims to include in its partnerships will be relatively small in scope, but informed by discussion with the organizational leadership and their intended use of the work. The work ranges from support in program development and capacity building (goal setting, logic models), client participation and engagement, understanding program effectiveness (short-term program evaluations), and stakeholder and/or community engagement.

Additionally, this work is highly multidisciplinary. CRISP recognizes the complexity of issues of social policy and that they require expertise in different areas to address them. We already work with faculty, students, and staff in Indianapolis and other campuses with research expertise/interest in relevant areas, and will continue to do so.

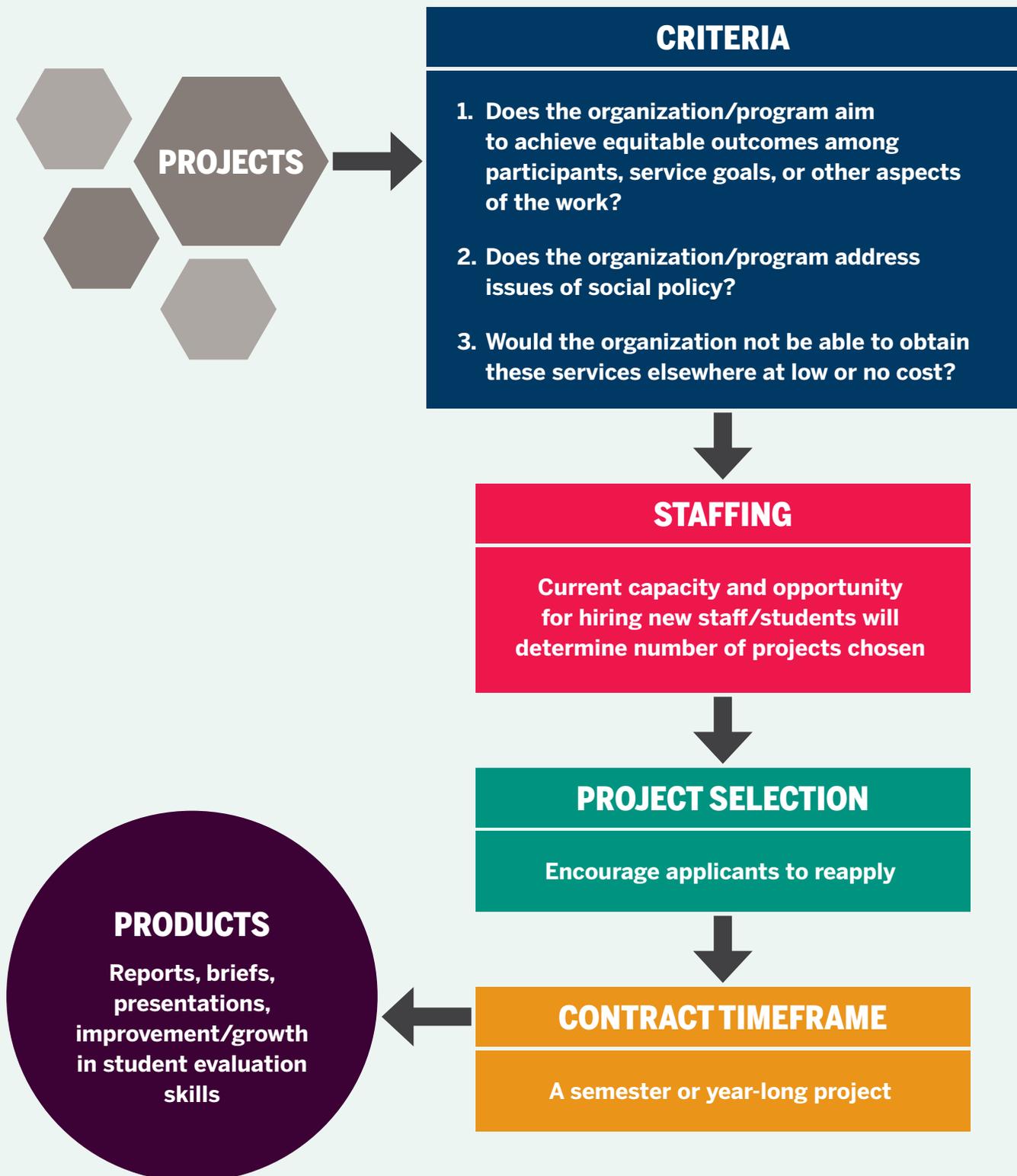
Our Process

The CRISP director and a small team of students have developed the assessment structure for organizational participation. The students have been instrumental in identifying, interviewing, and surveying philanthropic organizations from which many local nonprofits receive funding, as well as nonprofit organizations addressing social problems and/or equity; developing an application for organizations to complete; a rubric for scoring those applications; and a schedule for onboarding and managing those projects.

CRISP's team selects organizations based on three initial criteria:

1. Does the organization/program aim to achieve equitable outcomes among participants, service goals, or other aspects of the work?
2. Does the organization/program address issues of social policy?
3. Would the organization not be able to obtain these services elsewhere at low or no cost?

The team also considers the demographics of clients or neighborhood served, the size and need of related work, and the organization’s willingness to work with and potentially mentor students. Ideally, projects will take two to three months from start to finish. Project selection is also based on CRISP’s internal staffing capacity. After piloting this process with two organizations in spring 2020, interested organizations will be able to submit applications to participate in the clinic. Organizations that are not selected during their initial application process are highly encouraged to reapply in the future. Launching the CRISP Clinic pilot has been made possible due to generous contributions from the Women’s Philanthropy Leadership Council (WPLC) and PNC Bank. Their funding provides scholarships of up to \$5,000 for students to participate in the clinic.





LETTER *from* the DIRECTOR

For years, CRISP's staff and university partners have watched as community research partnerships have been strained because of a lack of funding and capacity. We have had to turn down work with nonprofit organizations that would benefit from research services but could not afford to pay for those services. We also have had faculty or staff who wanted to support an organization's evaluation needs but did not have the capacity to do so.

For example, an agency approached a CRISP team member in 2018 for support in analyzing survey results. Even though our team was passionate about the organization's mission—mentoring black and Latino boys without a father figure—we also did not have the resources to fully support their needs. In addition, while the project would have only required a few meetings and a week's worth of time, the organization could not cover the cost. That discussion sparked the desire to find a solution for them and similar organizations aiming to help at-risk communities. IUPUI currently does not offer a consistent, comparable service to partners at no cost.

Our new clinic will benefit nonprofit organizations, IUPUI students, and funders, while indirectly serving the needs of at-risk populations. Nonprofit leaders and stakeholders will gain increased knowledge they can use to inform their decision-making. That information is provided with an eye on and expertise in issues of equity and social policy topics to more effectively serve populations that require targeted support.

Our students also reap the rewards from their work with the clinic. These tremendous experiential learning opportunities allow them to support the needs of nonprofits while sharpening skills learned in the classroom. In addition, students develop relationships with local partners that open doors to potential employment, keeping IUPUI-educated talent in Indiana. These efforts align with the goals of CRISP and its students, and reinforces the role of an urban-serving public university.

The clinic's work will benefit local funders by helping organizations become better positioned to explain the effects of their program and the investment. When organizations have sufficient evidence to apply for other funding sources, they can diversify those sources and become less dependent on local donors. This allows funders to more widely distribute their dollars.

Finally, as organizations are able to make more strategic decisions, the at-risk populations they serve should benefit through better services and clearer goals that may improve their quality of life.

Our hope is that the CRISP Evaluation Clinic can bridge the gap to nonprofits in need of evaluation services, and rebuild strained relationships to fulfill our mission to analyze and disseminate community-relevant research about social disparities and complex policy issues.

Breanca Merritt

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MISSION STATEMENT

We analyze and disseminate community-relevant research about social disparities and complex policy issues.



MEET *the* TEAM

Since CRISP's inception, we have witnessed first-hand how a diverse, multidisciplinary team of students has enriched our projects. We are proud to employ a team made up of individuals with varied skill sets and diverse backgrounds, contributing to a work environment that values people of all walks of life and perspectives. In our first year, we have created a robust hiring framework that has allowed us to expand student roles and provide new learning opportunities. In addition to our research assistants, we have incorporated service learning assistants, interns, and students on scholarship to our team. This framework and recent staff hires supports CRISP's trajectory to build capacity for more projects in the coming year.

WE'RE
EXCITED
ABOUT

The CRISP Clinic offers us the unique opportunity to build relationships with community partners. We will be able to bridge gaps for organizations that serve diverse populations and have unique equity-related challenges but lack the resources to evaluate their services effectively. In doing so, CRISP will uphold our mission and vision for equity in research. Our team will work on projects that we feel are important but may not have been financially viable in the past. We are passionate about this work and are excited about ability to build capacity in the next year.

FOLLOW OUR WORK

OCTOBER 2019: Rental Trends in Marion County (2012-2017)

High rent burdens, stagnant incomes, and increasing rental costs contribute to unstable living situations for many renters in Marion County. Researchers at CRISP looked at the relationships between location, incomes, and race. Read the full report on rental trends in Marion County at [this link](#).

MAY 2019: Eviction Trends in Marion County (2010-2016)

Marion County accounts for 40 percent of evictions in Indiana and has the third-highest eviction rate in the state. CRISP examined eviction trends in Marion County, the impact of those trends, and recommendations to address the issue. Read the full report on eviction trends in Marion County at [this link](#).

MARCH 2019: Bias Crime Charges in the U.S. (1990-2016)

CRISP analyzed data from bias crimes in the United States to examine links between bias crimes and bias crime charges. The findings have policy implications, including the fact that effectiveness of bias crime legislation should be further evaluated for impact and operation. Read the bias crime brief at [this link](#).

HIGHLIGHTS

41ST ANNUAL FALL RESEARCH CONFERENCE



November 7, 2019

Breanca Merritt, Ph.D. and O'Neil school alumna, Morgan Farnworth, M.P.A., presented their joint research paper “Does Rental Policy Contribute to Disparity? State Landlord-Tenant Policy and Eviction Rates in Racial/Ethnic Minority Neighborhoods” at the annual meeting of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management. The paper aims to examine to what extent state policies reduce or exacerbate eviction rates in minority neighborhoods. Read an overview of the paper at [this link](#).

IUPUI PART-TIME JOB FAIR



September 5, 2019

When our team learned about the IUPUI Part-time Job Fair in September, we were excited about the opportunity to connect students with our work. We spoke to more than 100 students from all disciplines during the event. We had students from unanticipated disciplines—such as engineering, computer sciences, and nursing—approach our table wanting to know more about CRISP and the work we do. The experience was eye-opening and taught us that we need to expand our recruitment efforts further to include some of these disciplines.

MARION COUNTY REENTRY & HOUSING STUDY



August 11, 2019

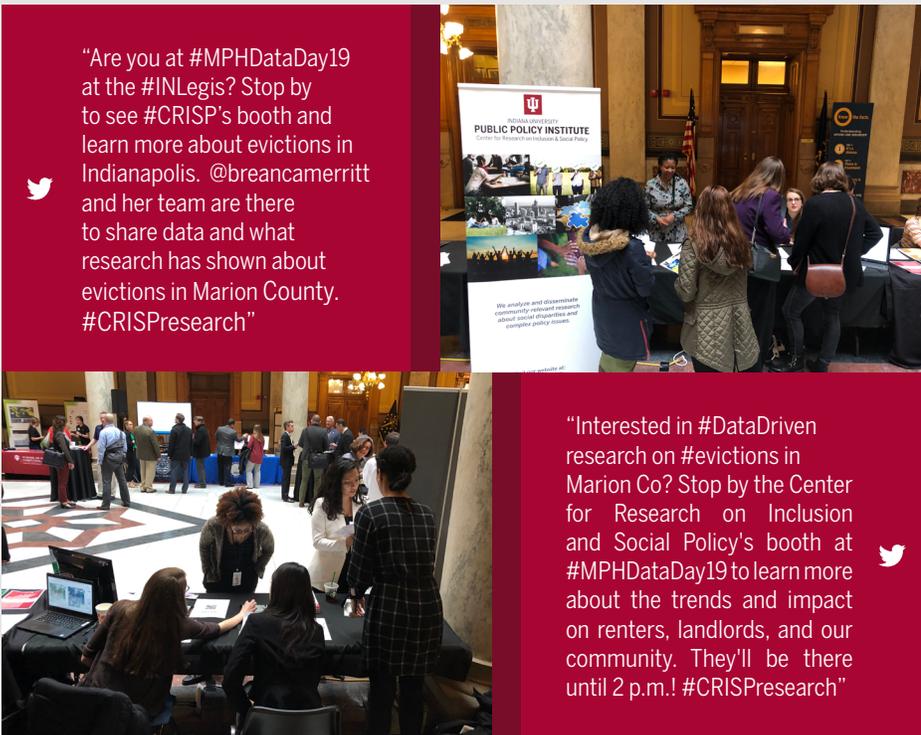
Kelsie Stringham-Marquis served as a panelist for a dialogue session titled “Illuminating the Social and Invisible Consequences of Mass Incarceration” at the 2019 Annual Society for the Study of Social Problems meeting in New York City. Kelsie also presented the “Marion County Reentry and Housing” study she developed with Dr. Eric Grommon, director of the Center for Health and Justice Research. As a result, colleges across the country have reached out with interest to replicate portions of the study.

DATA DAY 2019

March 20, 2019

CRISP had the opportunity to participate in MPH Data Day 2019, an annual data-driven showcase hosted by the Indiana Management Performance Hub (MPH). Our team presented an interactive map with eviction data from Marion County as well as findings from the center's Bias Crimes policy brief published in January.

Follow [this link](#) to view our interactive map.



“Are you at #MPHDataDay19 at the #INLegis? Stop by to see #CRISP’s booth and learn more about evictions in Indianapolis. @breancamerritt and her team are there to share data and what research has shown about evictions in Marion County. #CRISPresearch”

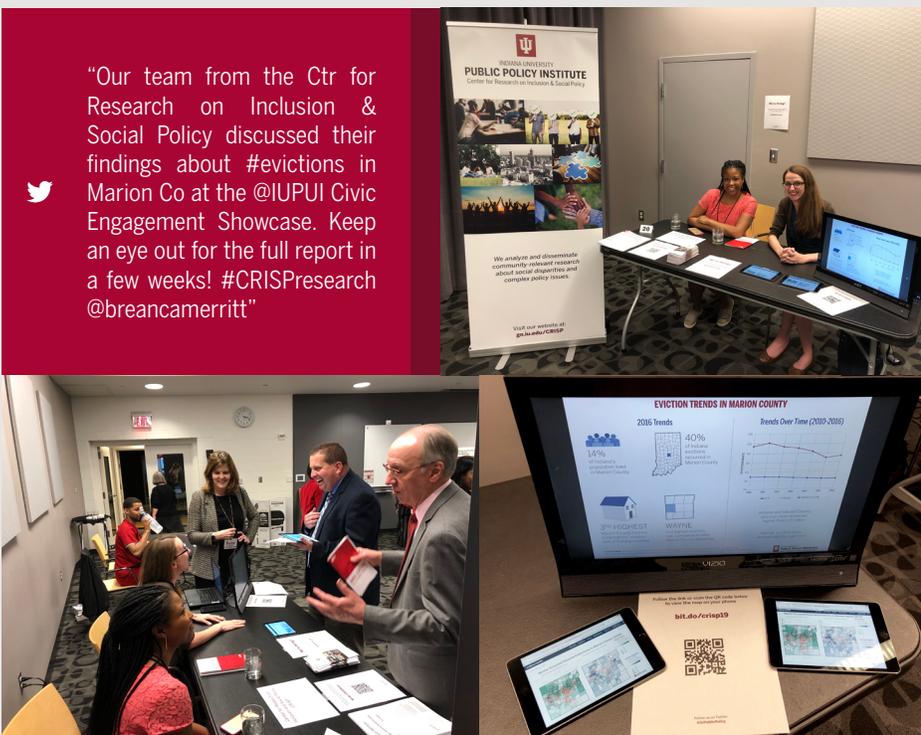
“Interested in #DataDriven research on #evictions in Marion Co? Stop by the Center for Research on Inclusion and Social Policy’s booth at #MPHDataDay19 to learn more about the trends and impact on renters, landlords, and our community. They’ll be there until 2 p.m.! #CRISPresearch”

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT SHOWCASE 2019

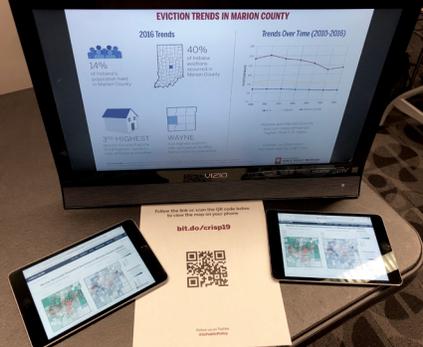
April 9, 2019

Our team shared CRISP evictions research with a new audience at the 15th annual IUPUI Bringle and Hatcher Civic Engagement Showcase.

This celebratory event gathered IUPUI faculty, staff, and students to share information, offer networking opportunities, and recognize the diverse community engagement activities that are taking place across Central Indiana.



“Our team from the Ctr for Research on Inclusion & Social Policy discussed their findings about #evictions in Marion Co at the @IUPUI Civic Engagement Showcase. Keep an eye out for the full report in a few weeks! #CRISPresearch @breancamerritt”



CRISP IN THE NEWS

Number of times
CRISP appeared
in the news



Most
popular policy
brief



CRISP LAUNCH

In January 2019, the O'Neill School and IU Public Policy Institute announced the launch of the new Center for Research on Inclusion and Social Policy. CRISP's mission was to research issues that address equitable outcomes related to social policy. The launch made headlines across the state from outlets including **Inside Indiana Business**, **WFYI**, **Indiana Public Media**, the **Indianapolis Business Journal**, and **The Statehouse File**.

BIAS CRIMES

Just weeks after CRISP's launch, the team released a policy brief on bias crimes, timed with the ongoing debate at the Indiana Statehouse on a bill to address hate crimes. The findings were featured in several news reports including on **WISH-TV**, in the **Indianapolis Star**, on **WTHR**, in **Indiana Public Media**, the **Indianapolis Business Journal**, **The Statehouse File**, **NUVO**, and dozens of other outlets statewide.

EVICITION TRENDS

CRISP's policy brief on eviction trends in Marion County garnered attention during the course of several months and continues to be used as a resource for media when discussing issues relating to housing. The analysis in this brief has been featured on the **ALL IN radio show**, **Fox59**, **Indiana Public News Service**, **WTLC-FM**, and other outlets.

RENTAL TRENDS

On the heels of CRISP's policy brief on eviction trends, the team also analyzed data and research on rental trends and the high rent burden many renters struggle with in Marion County. Their findings were featured in stories in the **Indiana Economic Digest**, **WFYI**, and the **Indianapolis Recorder**.

YOUTH DISCIPLINE

CRISP's media work extends beyond its own publications. When a WRTV investigative reporter was examining data relating to youth discipline in schools, she reached out to CRISP for insight. CRISP director Breanca Merritt, Ph.D., provided important context and background to help explain some of the racial disparities seen across the state and between districts. The story aired as part of **WRTV's November sweeps series** on the topic.



How to SUPPORT CRISP

You can help CRISP continue its research, change lives of students, and impact our community by making a contribution to our general support fund. Your generosity will further establish the center as a leader in inclusion and social policy research.

Support the Center for Research on Inclusion & Social Policy Fund Online Giving

Online giving is the simple, secure way to invest in the CRISP's future.



Mail Your Gift

To make a gift by check, money order, or credit card, print and complete the **mail-in gift form**.

If you would like information on how to give in other ways, please contact O'Neill IUPUI Director of Development Michelle Soucy at msoucy@iupui.edu or 317-278-2461.



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