

Department of Public Policy & Administration
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<https://theaok.github.io>
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EMPLOYMENT

Associate Professor of Public Policy, Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey, Camden, 2018-??

Assistant Professor of Public Policy, Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey, Camden, 2012-18

Research Scientist at Texas Schools Project (2010-11) and Clinical Assistant Professor, UT-Dallas, 2010-12

EDUCATION

Post-doctoral Fellow, Institute for Quantitative Social Science, Harvard University, 2008-10

PhD Public Policy and Political Economy, The University of Texas at Dallas, 2008

MAJOR PUBLICATIONS (all on Google Scholar; publications with students listed under service; AOK=Adam Okulicz-Kozaryn; click text for PDF)

2026 Urbanization and Happiness. A Research Agenda for Happiness. Why we want to know, what we know, and what we want to know additionally.
Editors: Jan Ott and Ruut Veenhoven. Edward Elgar Publishing

2025 AOK, Martinez L Colombia: Unlivable but Happy. Fool's Paradise? (No, a Real Paradise, Better than the US) Applied Research in Quality of Life

2024 D'Italia M, AOK Constructing General Human Agency Indicators (GHAs) and a General Personal Agency Scale (GPAS)
Social Indicators Research

Urban Regrets (Unhappy Metros: Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS)) Heliyon

2023 Magdy Zaki E, AOK, Valente RR Subjective Well-being and Urbanization in Egypt Cities

AOK, Everett B, Magdy Zaki E, Happiness is In The Air if It Grows (Growing Places are Happier than Shrinking ones) Urban Affairs Review

2022 Unhappy Metros: Panel Evidence Applied Research in Quality of Life

AOK, Valente R, Misanthropolis: Do Cities Promote Misanthropy? Cities

2021 AOK, Valente R, Urban unhappiness is common Cities

AOK, Morawski L, A similar effect of volunteering and pensions on subjective wellbeing of elderly Economics and Sociology

2020 Valente R, AOK, Religiosity and Trust: Evidence from the United States Review of Religious Research

AOK, Valente R, The Perennial Dissatisfaction of Urban Upbringing Cities

AOK, Morawski L, Effect of volunteering and pensions on subjective wellbeing of elderly—are there cross-country differences?
Applied Research in Quality of Life

2019 Are we happier among our own race? Economics and Sociology

AOK, Altman M, The Energy Paradox: Energy Use And Happiness Applied Research in Quality of Life

2018 AOK, Valente R, No Urban Malaise for Millennials Regional Studies

2017 AOK, Valente R, Livability and Subjective Wellbeing Across European Cities Applied Research in Quality of Life

Strzelecka M, AOK, Is tourism conducive to residents' social trust? Evidence from large-scale surveys. Tourism Review

AOK, Valente R, Life Satisfaction of Career Women and Housewives Applied Research in Quality of Life

AOK, Valente R, City Life: Glorification, Desire, and the Unconscious Size Fetish, ed. by I Kapoor, in Psychoanalysis and the Global, University of Nebraska Press

AOK, Golden L, Happiness is flextime Applied Research in Quality of Life

2016 AOK, Strzelecka M, Happy Tourists, Unhappy Locals Social Indicators Research

Happiness Research for Public Policy and Administration Transforming Government: People, Process and Policy

Unhappy Metropolis (When American City Is Too Big) Cities

AOK, Mazelis J M, More Unequal in Income, More Unequal in WellBeing Social Indicators Research

AOK, Mazelis J M, Urbanism and Happiness: A Test of Wirth's Theory of Urban Life Urban Studies

2015 Freedom and Life Satisfaction in Transition Society and Economy

AOK, Nash T, Tursi N O, Luxury Car Owners Are Not Happier Than Frugal Car Owners International Review of Economics

The More Religiosity, the Less Creativity Across US Counties Business Creativity & the Creative Economy

Income Inequality and Wellbeing Applied Research in Quality of Life

Happiness and Place: Cities v Nature. Why Life is Better Outside of the City? Palgrave Macmillan

2014 AOK, Holmes IV O, Avery D R, The Subjective Well-Being Political Paradox: Happy Welfare States and Unhappy Liberals Journal of Applied Psychology

Winners and Losers in Transition: Preferences For Redistribution and Nostalgia For Communism In Eastern Europe Kyklos

'Freedom From' and 'Freedom To' across countries Social Indicators Research

Natural Sprawl Administration & Society (Disputatio Sine Fine section) (section of the journal reviewed by editor only)

2013 Cluttered Writing: Adjectives and Adverbs in Academia Scientometrics

City Life: Rankings (Livability) vs Perceptions (Satisfaction) Social Indicators Research

2012 Does Religious Diversity Make Us Unhappy? Mental Health, Religion & Culture

Income and Well-being across European Provinces Social Indicators Research

2011 Berry B J L, AOK, An Urban-Rural Happiness Gradient Urban Geography

Geography of European Life Satisfaction Social Indicators Research

Europeans Work To Live and Americans Live To Work (Who is Happy to Work More: Americans or Europeans?)
Journal of Happiness Studies

2010 Religiosity and Life Satisfaction Across Nations Mental Health, Religion & Culture

2009 Berry B J L, AOK, Dissatisfaction with City Life: A New Look at Some Old Questions Cities

EXTERNAL GRANTS

190k PLN (~\$50k) PI "The effect of social transfers and social capital on happiness of elderly." Vistula University, Warsaw Poland, Polish National Science Foundation (Narodowe Centrum Nauki NCN) 2016/21/B/HS4/03052017-2019

TEACHING

2025 recipient of department's Jay A Sigler award for "outstanding service and dedication to students" (awarded by students); the plaque says "this award is given to the faculty member who exhibits a commitment to student's academic development and personal growth."

GIS for data science <https://theaok.github.io/gisPy/> 2023-present

Data Processing (data management for data science) <https://theaok.github.io/datManPy> 2023-present

Data Visualization <https://theaok.github.io/vis> 2023-present

Coping with Extremes: Ecological resilience & human well-being [innovative class co-taught with biology dept] 2019

Community & WellBeing (Happiness and Place) 2018-present

Data Management 2016-present

GIS for Public Sector/Urban mapping 2012-present

Quantitative Methods 2 2013-2017, 2024

Research Methods 2012-present

Introduction to Regional and Economic Development 2012-2014

Quantitative Methods 1 2012-2013

SERVICE

SERVICE TO THE FIELD/PROFESSION:

Review papers (approx 3-4/mo or 36-48/year as of Jan2026; "top journals" underlined; starting in 2022: last 2 digits of year of review shown):

- <informal/for a colleague> [24]
- Acta Sociologica
- Applied Economics [23,23]
- Applied Research in Quality of Life [23,23,23,24,24,24,24,26]
- Basic and Applied Social Psychology [22]
- BMJ Open

- British Journal of Political Science [25]
- Cities [22,23,23,23,23,23,24,24,24,24,24,25,25,25,25,25,25,25,25]
- City, Culture and Society
- City, Territory and Architecture [24]
- Cogent Arts & Humanities [23]
- Cognition and Emotion
- Communications Psychology [23]
- Discover Public Health [25,26]
- Ecological Economics [24]
- Environment and Planning A
- Economics and Politics
- European Journal of Social Psychology
- European Journal of Political Economy [23,23,24]
- European Societies
- European Urban and Regional Studies [22,22]
- Frontiers in Psychology [23]
- Global Transitions [24]
- Humanities and Social Sciences Communications [23,23,23,24,24,25,25]
- Heliyon [23,24]
- International Journal of Comparative Sociology [23,24,24,25]
- International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health
- International Journal of Psychology
- International Journal of Social Economics [22]
- International Journal of Wellbeing [25]
- International Perspectives in Psychology: Research, Practice, Consultation
- International Sociology
- Journal of Comparative Economics
- Journal of Contemporary Religion
- Journal of Economic Growth
- Journal of Economic Psychology
- Journal of Economic and Social Geography
- Journal of Personality and Social Psychology
- Journal of Religion and Health
- Journal of Regional Science
- Journal of Happiness Studies [22,23,24,26,26]
- Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management
- Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs
- Journal of Public Policy [23,23]
- Journal of the American Planning Association
- Journal of Urbanism
- Land Use Policy [23,24,24]
- Local Development and Society [25]
- Mental Health, Religion and Culture
- Millah: Journal of Religious Studies [25]

- Nature Communications [24]
- Open Psychology Journal
- Quality of Life Research
- Papers in Regional Science [22,22]
- PLOS ONE [22]
- Political Behavior [22]
- PNAS Nexus [24]
- Problems of Post-Communism [22]
- Psychology of Religion and Spirituality
- Public Administration Review [24,25]
- Regional Studies [22,22]
- Review of Political Economy
- Routledge (book publisher) [22]
- Rural Sociology [22]
- Urban Geography
- Urban Studies [25]
- Urban Affairs Review
- Utilities Policy [25,25]
- Science of the Total Environment
- Scientific Reports [24]
- Scienze Regionali Italian Journal of Regional Science
- Scientometrics [22,22]
- Semestre Economico (Universidad de Medellín) [22]
- Social Forces
- Social Psychological and Personality Science
- Social Indicators Research [as reviewer] [22,22,23,23,23,23,24,24,24,24,24,25,25,25,25,25]
- Social Indicators Research [as co-editor]¹ [25, 25, 25, 25, 25]
- Social Science And Medicine [24,24,25,25,25,25,25]
- Social Science Research [23]
- Social Sciences & Humanities Open [23]
- Sociological Spectrum
- Sociology of Religion
- Sustainability
- Sustainable Cities and Society
- Sustainable Futures [25]
- The Lancet Planetary Health (IF >10)
- Third World Quarterly [22,23]
- Wellbeing, Space & Society [22,25]

Reviewed books for:

- Routledge [22]
- Cambridge U Pr [23]

¹ As a co-editor of Social Indicators Research, conducted through reviews (printed out, marked up, etc). Note: this is different from regular editing, where I just skim through the paper or read some parts only; and hence this extra work is listed here separately from editing as reviewing [starting oct2025 each such review marked with 2 last digits of year]

Served on editorial boards:

- Social Indicators Research: Associate Editor / Co-Editor² jan2024-??
- Political Behavior 19-22

Reviewed grant proposals:

- Polish National Science Foundation (NCN)
- Israel Science Foundation (ISF)

SERVICE TO STUDENTS:

Publications with students (all students unless indicated: “[not student]”):

- E Mikhaeil, AOK; Well-Being and the authoritarian welfare state: sector of employment and human happiness in Arab countries; Public Organization Review 2025
- MJ D’Italia, AOK; Constructing General Human Agency Indicators (GHAs) and a General Personal Agency Scale (GPAS); Social Indicators Research 2025
- E Mikhaeil, AOK; Public-private job satisfaction differential: The case of Egypt; Public Organization Review 2025
- AOK, BK Everett, E Mikhaeil; Happiness is In The Air if It Grows (Growing Places are Happier than Shrinking ones); Urban Affairs Review 2024
- E Mikhaeil, AOK; Subjective well-being and urbanization in Egypt; Cities 2024
- S Deb, AOK; Exploring the association of urbanisation and subjective well-being in India; Cities 2023
- FA Abarghui, R Javadi, E Mirabi, AOK; Experience of urban thermal pleasure: A qualitative study to the understanding of thermal-scape quality; Cities 2022
- R Stansfield [not student], E Aaronson, AOK; Police use of firearms: Exploring citizen, officer, and incident characteristics in a statewide sample; Journal of criminal justice 2021

Supervised dissertations for [year of graduation, first job]:

- Wei Chen [28??]
- Helena Cabezas [fa25 only]
- Erick W Udogu [27??]
- Douglas N Zacher [26??]
- Marlo Rossi [26??]
- Michael D’Italia [24, RU-Camden] PDF
- Shibin Yan [24, Walter Rand Institute for Public Affairs] PDF
- Aditi Manke [21, Virginia Tech] PDF
- Shourjya Deb [20, SIPRI] PDF

Served on dissertation committees:

- Jason Schweitzer (Prevention Science) [27??]
- Daniel Assamah [27??]
- Monty Sanders [26??]
- Brian Everett [27??]
- Yanan Li [stopped serving just before the proposal in 2023]
- Kate Cruz [22]
- Charles Ian Hugh Forsyth (University of Otago NZ) [22]
- Straso Jovanovski [19]

²This is not just sitting on the board of the journal and having an occasional board meeting, I am editing papers every week spending 2 + hrs/wk on skimming through the submitted manuscripts, inviting reviewers, reading reviews, and making editorial decisions.

- Spencer Clayton [18]
- Rasheda Weaver [17]
- Chris Wheeler [17]

Supervised data science master thesis for [year of graduation]:

- Bhavyani Doddha [25??]
- Nalluri Chandrahas [25??]
- Thanvitha Reddy Munagala [25]
- Pavan Satya Venigalla [25]
- Het Rakeshbhai Patel [25]
- Raman Srinivas Naik [25]

Served on master thesis committees in social science:

- Ethan Aaronson (crim) [20]
- Rachel Wagner (psy) [20]

Independent/Directed Study [starting in 23 counts shown (2014-present)]:

- fa25 x1
- sp25 x4
- fa24 x7
- sp24 x2
- fa23 x1

Researchers/Predocs/Postdocs/Lab Members:

- hired 2 data scientists (sep2025-jul26)

DEPARTMENTAL AND CAMPUS-WIDE SERVICE:

At Rutgers-Camden served on the following departmental committees:

- Awards/Events, chair 2013-16, 2021-22; 2023-25
- Awards/Events, member 2012-13, 2019-20, 2023
- Strategic Planning 2019-20
- PR/Website, chair 2014-16
- PR/Website, member 2012-13
- PhD, member 2014-21
- Methods Qualifying Exam, member 2012-21

Other Rutgers-Camden departmental service:

- held dissertation seminars for a group of doctoral candidates (in addition to one-on-one) Fall 2025
- led Brown Bag Seminars 2018-19; 2023-24
- As co-editor of a journal organized “Publish or Perish” workshop Oct 2024

At Rutgers-Camden served on the following campus-wide committees:

- AI committee Fall 2025
- Advancement and Promotions (A&P), member/ad hoc chair 2020-25
- Advancement and Promotions (A&P), member 2018-19
- Faculty Senate 2018-25
- Faculty Life, chair 2019-22
- Faculty Life, member 2014-15

Other Rutgers-Camden campus-wide service:

- led creation and maintenance of data science lab and MS in data science and associated certificate programs 2018-22
- served as director for data science certificate 2022-??

COMMUNITY SERVICE

assisted following students in their community projects:

- data science MS student Ojobo Agbo Eje: "Camden health" [click here for news webpage] [hired/supervised 4 students, budget \$30k] 2024-25
- public affairs PhD Zach Chengcheng Yue at Walter Rand Institute: Covid-19 in Atlantic County ... Spring-Fall 2025
- public affairs PhD Marlo Rossi at Walter Rand Institute: Abortion in South Jersey Fall 2025
- Hunterdon Central Regional High School student: happiness project Fall 2025

other community service:

- made GIS maps dashboard (containing work by students in my GIS class): available on campus or via RU VPN only: maps-dppa.camden.rutgers.edu 2019-23

MOST FREQUENT RECENT CONFERENCES

LASA (Latin American Studies Association) 2024

AAG (American Association of Geographers): 2015, 2016, 2017, covid19/none,

ISQOLS (International Society for Quality of Life Studies): 2015, 2017, 2018, covid19/none, 2023, 2024 (webinar)

ERSA (European Regional Science Association): 2015, 2017, 2018, covid19/none, 2023

AFFILIATE SCHOLAR

- Australian Centre on Quality of Life (2016-present)
- CURE: Center for Urban Research and Education, Rutgers-Camden (2012-18)
- EHERO: Erasmus Happiness Economics Research Organization, Erasmus, the Netherlands (2013-16)
- Vistula University, Warsaw, Poland (2015-18)