At Rice, you will find a vibrant, exciting, energetic program for the study of cities and community

For several thousands of years, but a small percentage of humans (<5%) lived in urban areas. This changed dramatically with the industrial revolution and subsequent world shifts.

Today the majority of the world’s people live in urban areas. Such changes have been massive in a short time. While such growth brings vitality and promise, it also generates anxiety and challenge — from burgeoning ethnic diversity and alarming educational and income disparities to inadequate social services and unsustainable urban infrastructures.

Urban Sociology focuses on *urbanization*—the process of becoming urban, city building, the links between urban areas—and *urbanism*—the effects on human social relationships, institutions, cultures, and more. At Rice, through the department and the Kinder Institute for Urban Research, we focus on primary and solution-based research, with the goal of conducting cutting-edge, creative studies that foster the development of more productive, sustainable, and humane cities.

We run programs of research that focus on specific aspects of urban—such as urban health, urban educational innovations, immigration, race and ethnic relations, community development, the growth and change of Houston—and that focus on global, comparative studies of cities. We do this by funding specific programs, a strong emphasis on Houston as a laboratory for study, our annual Kinder Houston Areas Survey (33 years and counting), and our international program for the study of world cities.

We are fortunate to be situated in the heart of Houston, a metropolitan area of well over 6 million people, a top immigrant destination, the most racially diverse large metropolitan area in the United States, one of the nation’s fastest growing areas, and the nation’s most understudied urban area. We are also fortunate to have many connections to other world cities and several ongoing research projects across the globe.

At Rice, the possibilities are endless for research by bright, developing scholars who care about making cities better places for all people.

**Related Faculty:**

Sergio Chávez
Michael Emerson
Steve Klineberg
Ruth Lopez-Turley

**Urban Health Faculty**

Justin Denney
Rachel Tolbert Kimbro

**HERC**

Ruth Lopez-Turley