

Welcome

On behalf of the Planning Committee, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the 2007 AALS Workshop on Family Law: Bridging the Gap Between Social Science and Law.

The emphasis of this Workshop, as the subtitle suggests, is what family law teachers and scholars should know about the most current social science research relating to the family. Pulling together experts in sociology, psychology, psychiatry, and medicine, the Workshop will examine research findings relating to child custody, welfare, marriage, alternative reproductive medicine (in a session co-sponsored with the American Society for Reproductive Medicine), domestic violence, and dispute resolution. Throughout the conference, speakers will address examples of social science research that enhance legal decisionmaking in family law, and examples in which the research is misused, or is useful only if used with the great caution. The Workshop also examines differences within the research based on income, race and ethnicity, gender, and class. The Workshop closes with a session intended to be instructive to family law scholars intending to conduct their own social science research, including tips for fundraising to support such projects.

An added feature of the 2007 Workshop on Family Law is a special session Thursday afternoon on creative methods for teaching family law. This session features teaching methods using music, film, and role play. It is intended to stimulate discussions among participants throughout the Workshop about techniques they have used to improve learning in the family law classroom.

I want to thank the members of the Planning Committee who have helped put this workshop together. These members include Margaret Friedlander Brinig (Notre Dame Law School), Ira Mark Ellman (Arizona State University), Blake D. Morant (incoming dean at Wake Forest University), and Carl E. Schneider (University of Michigan). I also thank the AALS staff for all of the work they have done to help make this conference a success.

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Chair, Planning Committee for AALS
Workshop on Family Law