

Suzanne Wenzel

Richard and Ann Thor Professorship in Urban Development Professor Social Work Chair Dept. of Adult Mental Health and Wellness at USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work

Los Angeles, CA, US

Interdisciplinary researcher, specializing in the health-related needs of vulnerable populations

Biography

Suzanne Wenzel has devoted much of her career to interdisciplinary research that seeks to understand and address health-related needs of vulnerable populations, particularly individuals experiencing homelessness in urban communities.

Wenzel has served as the principal investigator on ten grants from the National Institutes of Health. Funding for these projects from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the National Institute of Mental Health and the National Institute on Drug Abuse has totaled more than \$15 million. Her research involving homeless persons has included an investigation of the social context of risk for substance use and HIV/AIDS among homeless men, women and youth; examination of the relationship of trauma to substance use and HIV/AIDS risk among women; and adaptation of evidence-based programs to address HIV risk, victimization by violence, and post-traumatic stress among women. She is investigating the process of transitioning to permanent supportive housing among individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, and associated changes in personal relationships, behavioral health and risks, health service use, and quality of life. She organized a Los Angeles County-wide forum on the topic of integrated care and housing for homeless persons, and has participated in several regional and national efforts to prevent and end homelessness. Wenzel has also conducted research on substance abuse treatment quality, and organizational linkages among treatment courts for drug-involved offenders and community-based providers of behavioral health services.

After completing her doctoral studies in community psychology, Wenzel was awarded a National Institute of Mental Health post-doctoral fellowship in the Rutgers/Princeton program in mental health research. Prior to her appointment at USC in 2009, she was a senior behavioral scientist at the RAND Corporation in Santa Monica, Calif., and was responsible for research quality assurance in the RAND Health program.

Industry Expertise

Program Development, Education/Learning, Health Care - Services, Health Care - Facilities, Health and Wellness, Health Care - Providers, Research, Public Policy

Areas of Expertise

Substance abuse treatment, sexual risk behavior and risk reduction, Post-traumatic stress disorder in women, Homelessness and homeless women, HIV and AIDS, Drug and alcohol abuse

Affiliations

Rand Corporation

Education

Rutgers/Princeton Program in Mental Health Research and UCLA Department of Sociology
Postdoctoral Fellowship Mental Health Research

University of Texas at Austin
PhD Community Psychology

Texas State University
BA Geography and Urban/Regional Planning

Accomplishments

Leadership Institute Award
Awarded by the University of Southern California, Higher Education Resource Services (HERS)

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