

# The Department of Geography at The University of Iowa

Clyde Kohn Colloquium (public lecture)

## *Integrating and Disseminating Massive Census Databases – Experiences from the Minnesota Population Center*

Time: 3:30 pm  
Friday, April 25, 2014  
S107 PBB

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**Director, Spatial Analysis Core**  
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Social scientists, journalists, planners, and government agencies have long used census data to study segregation, fertility, mortality, family structures, and migration. These studies were relatively easy to conduct as long as they only examined a single point in time and were conducted in places with good data access. As soon as scholars considered change over time or wanted to study multiple countries, they confronted many data integration and access challenges, including variables whose definitions change over time, variables whose meanings differ across countries, geographic units whose boundaries constantly change, and the lack of easy mechanisms for discovering or obtaining the necessary data. The Minnesota Population Center has spent the last 20 years confronting these challenges. I will describe the Center's integration and access strategy with respect to three major data infrastructure projects: National Historical Geographic Information System (NHGIS), IPUMS-International, and Terra Populus. Each project provides users with vast arrays of demographic and geospatial data, but each also has unique integration problems that must be addressed.