**KATHLEEN ERNST**

[**kmernst2@illinois.edu**](mailto:kmernst2@illinois.edu)

**EDUCATION**

**University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**, Champaign, IL 2015 - Present

Doctor of Philosophy (ABD), Department of Sociology

Research focus: Impacts of entrepreneurship on women’s development in Cuba

**University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**, Champaign, IL 2012 - 2015

Master of Arts, Latin American Studies

Thesis: Leveraging Bargaining Power under Patriarchy: The Economic Development of Post-Revolutionary Cuban Women

**University of Havana**, Havana, Cuba 1998, 2006 & 2014

Spanish language program for Foreign Students

Certification: Spanish–advanced level

**University of Georgia**, Athens, GA2005

Bachelor of Business Administration, international business

Business specialization: Economics

Minor: Spanish

Certification: Latin American and Caribbean Studies

**RESEARCH INTERESTS**

Women’s development, global and transnational Sociology, qualitative methods, inequalities

**FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS**

* University of Illinois, Graduate School Dissertation Research Travel Grant 2022
* University of Illinois, Department of Sociology Research Travel Grant 2018
* American Council of the Blind, Arnold Sadler Scholarship 2016
* University of Illinois Master’s Project Travel Grant 2014
* Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind Scholarship 2014
* Tinker Foundation Research Fellowship 2014
* University of Illinois (Graduate School Block Grant) Fellowship 2012 - 2014
* Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic National Academic Achievement Award 2005

**ASSISTANTSHIPS**

**University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**, Champaign, IL

Department of Sociology

* Undergraduate Office Fall 2017
* Political Sociology Fall 2016
* Technology and Society Fall 2015

**CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

**University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**, Champaign, IL

Department of Sociology, Graduate Student Conference in Sociology 2017

Women’s Entrepreneurship in Cuba: Challenges and Hopes for Women’s Economic Security

**INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE**

**University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**, Champaign, IL

**Student Activist** 2012 - Present

Educate University administrators at all levels to effect policy changes surrounding the provision of effective disability accommodation to blind students

**University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**, Champaign, IL

* Technology Services, Aira On-campus Initiative, Student Advisor and Presenter 2019 - 2020
* Disability Ally Program, Student Panelist 2019
* Chancellor’s Committee on Access and Accommodation, Student Advisor 2017 - 2019
* Department of Sociology Panel on Scholar Activism, Organizer 2017
* Cuban Studies Workshop (Taller Cubano), Member and Discussion Leader 2016 - 2018
* Women and Gender in Global Perspectives, Executive Committee Advisor 2013 - 2014

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**NATIONAL INDUSTRIES FOR THE BLIND**, Alexandria, VA

**Project Manager**  2010 - 2012

Formal management and project management training with national nonprofit organization in geographically diverse affiliates

* Developed fundraiser model to enhance name recognition, expand donor base and cultivate corporate relationships and funding sources
* Developed tracking tool for the integration of complex product development processes, including explanatory materials, critical paths, and interdependencies
* Established team accountabilities and improved communications

**UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA, TERRY COLLEGE OF BUSINESS**, Athens, GA

**Program Director, Graduate Research Projects in Cuba** 2003 - 2007

Developed and directed graduate research projects in Cuba, designed to fulfill the international business academic degree requirement for the MBA degree

* Collaborated with Cuban and US academics, administrators, government officials and business professionals in the development of content, logistical coordination and execution
* Conducted marketing and recruitment that attracted the most highly qualified participants to represent the program and its mission
* Delivered workshops on protocol and travel to Cuba that ensured participant success and bolstered partnerships with Cuban officials
* Led groups that included graduate students, University faculty and high-level administrators
* Managed project budgets
* Supervised five domestic and overseas support staff

**Program Manager, PricewaterhouseCoopers / IBM MBA Program** 2000 - 2008

Managed MBA program with all related academic and non-academic activities

* Managed day-to-day program operations and directed student groups through completion of 27-month MBA program
* Collaborated in the development of policies and procedures; directed their implementation, resulting in smoother operation of program execution
* Expanded scope of program through close attention to constituent needs and high-level customer service
* Managed multiple, on-going projects; produced short- and long-range schedules
* Handled group sizes up to 150
* Supervised four support staff

**CERTIFICATIONS**

**ESI International,** Arlington, VA 2011 - 2012

Certifications completed toward Project Management Professional

* Managing Projects and Project Leadership
* Management and Communications

**University of Georgia,** Athens, GA 10/06

Grant Writing Certification Course

**HONORS AND AWARDS**

University of Georgia, Office of International Education, Study Abroad Directors Award 2004

**OTHER QUALIFICATIONS**

* Bilingual: Spanish
* Extensive professional and academic experience with Cuba, visiting 23 times and traveling to 10 of 14 provinces
* Proven developer of graduate and executive education programs: Cuba, U.S., Belgium, France and Japan
* 17+ years in professional and managerial experience in domestic and international, academic and nonprofit environments
* 15+ years in project management, program development, logistics and coordination