The Mansueto Institute Lunch Colloquium Series

The Civic Life of Cities: Organizational Determinants of Openness and Civic Embeddedness in Cities

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Civil society organizations invigorate cities and shape them into hubs of both innovation and contestation. Besides direct influences through service provision and political advocacy, civil society organizations also indirectly shape cities’ civic capacity—the population’s ability to recognize social problems, organize solutions for these problems, and mobilize collective support for these solutions. How civil society is organized thus has important implications for how a city’s civic capacity grows, endures, and changes. This talk reports on a series of mixed-methods studies of organizational-level change in the nonprofit sector of the San Francisco Bay Area to shed light on the mechanisms by which nonprofits contribute to civic capacity. In particular, the talk highlights the role of management practices from the business world in shaping the degree to which nonprofits openly engage with constituents and are embedded in their urban environment. The talk concludes with an overview of early findings from the Civic Life of Cities project, a comparative study of nonprofit organizations in Sydney, Vienna, Seattle, Taipei, Shenzhen, and San Francisco that takes this research to the global level. To read more about the Civic Life of Cities, see http://civiclifeofcities.org.

Wednesday, December 4
Searle Chemical Laboratory
Suite 240B
12:30 - 1:30pm
Lunch will be provided