

Kathleen Mullan Harris, Ph.D.

James Haar Distinguished Professor, Sociology; Faculty Fellow at Carolina Population Center at UNC-Chapel Hill

Chapel Hill, NC, US

Areas of expertise: Social Demography; Population Health; Family, Poverty, & Public Policy; Data Collection & Research Design.

Kathleen Mullan Harris studies social inequality and health seeking to understand how disadvantaged environments and social experiences influence physical well-being across the life course. Her research focuses on the biosocial processes that increase health risks early in life before disease is manifest to inform policies that reduce health disparities and improve population health. Harris is Principal Investigators and Director of the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health (Add Health), a longitudinal study of more than 20 thousand teens who are being followed into adulthood. Under Harris' leadership, the study has pioneered innovative study designs and integrative multidisciplinary research to understand social, environmental, behavioral, biological and genetic linkages in developmental and health trajectories across the early life course. She has been an advocate within the social science and population disciplines for bridging social and biomedical sciences to advance knowledge on the development of health disparities from both an inter- and intra-generational perspective to inform public health and social policy. Her publications appear in a wide range of disciplinary journals including demography, genetics, family, epidemiology, biology, public policy, survey methodology, medicine, and social and health behavior. Dr. Harris was awarded the Golden Goose Award from the US Congress for federally funded research that leads to major breakthroughs in medicine, social behavior, and technological research and the Irene Taeuber Award from the Population Association of America in recognition of original and important contributions to the scientific study of population. She is Chair of the Committee on Population at the National Academies of Sciences and Chair of the Social Science and Population Study Section. Dr. Harris is past president of the Population Association of America and an elected member of the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Education/Learning

Family, Poverty and Social Policy, Social Inequality, Health Disparities

National Academies of Sciences, Population Association of America, American Academy of Arts and Sciences

University of Pennsylvania
Ph.D. Demography

University of Pennsylvania
M.A. Demography

Pennsylvania State University
B.A. Computer Science

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