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Profile

Scholar-practitioner and doctoral candidate with over a decade of leadership in public service and non-profit administration. I study housing policy, affordability, and the production of precarity through qualitative and mixed-methods research. My work translates complex structural analysis into actionable community-based solutions. I am dedicated to teaching the next generation of Public Administration and Planning professionals how to bridge the gap between critical research and high-level professional practice.

Education

Doctoral Candidate in Community and Regional Planning
MA in Economics
Master of Public Administration
BA in Economics and Political Science

University of Texas, Austin
University of Montana, Missoula
University of Montana, Missoula
Hollins University, Roanoke, Virginia

Current Research Projects

Houston, We Might Have a Problem: How Texas' largest city came to exemplify a successful Housing First response system and what it means for national strategies to end homelessness
Dissertation project, defense Fall 2026.

Anti-Displacement Early Warning System

Exploratory mixed-method project for the City of Austin with co-principal investigators Dr. Alex Karner and Dr. Elizabeth Mueller. Report Summer 2026.

Completed Research

"Our Cities Failed Us": Women Confront Carceral Urban Spaces

Independent project with Samaria Bashar and Dr. Katherine Pérez-Quiñones. Publications in development.

[Housing Opportunities for Historically Excluded Groups](#)

Led by the Center of Excellence for Housing and Community Development Policy Research at Texas Southern University with support from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Publications in development.

[Keeping Shelters in Place: Understanding the Impacts of Disasters on Residential Rental Property Owners](#)

Led by Iowa State University with support from the National Institute of Science. Publications listed below.

Austin's Homelessness Advisory Council: Impact Evaluation and the Case for Care

I facilitated the development of the Council's Five-Year Impact Evaluation and helped the group develop a presentation for the Texas Homeless Network 2022 Conference on Ending Homelessness.

Esperanza Community Safety and Security Planning

Facilitated community-based policing alternative safety planning within a non-congregate shelter.

Implemented Summer 2022.

Publications

Cook, T. "Mickey's Mission: Revisiting Alternative Visions for Homeless Policy ". *Journal of Planning History* (under review).

Bashar, S.B., **Cook, T.** and Quiñones, K. P. "Arrested Utopia: Reimagining Planning from the Carceral System". *Journal of Planning Education and Research*. (under review)

Mueller, E. and **Cook, T.** (2025). Protecting residential neighborhoods: City enforcement of private deed restrictions in Houston, Texas. Report for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. (not peer-reviewed)

Cook, T. M., Rongerude, J., Mueller, E., & Kuhlmann, D. (2024). "Providing Rental Housing: A Systematic Literature Review of Residential Rental Property Owner Decision Making". *Journal of Planning Literature*, 39(4), 535-547.

Conference Papers

2026 "Shadow Zoning: Dismantling the Myth of an Un-zoned Houston". Society for American City and Regional Planning History (SACRPH). Cincinnati, OH. October 15-18.

- Abstract accepted. First author with Dr. Elizabeth Mueller

"Remembering Structural Solutions to Eliminate Homelessness". International Conference on Urban Affairs. Chicago, IL. April 29-May 2.

2025 "The Significance of Elected Leadership in Homeless System Change". Annual Meeting of the Association of Collegiate School of Planning (ACSP). Minneapolis, MN. October 23-25.

"Exit Interviews: When Individual Residential Rental Property Owners Leave a Market". Annual Meeting of the Association of Collegiate School of Planning (ACSP). October 23-25.

- Second author with Dr. Jane Rongerude

"Mickey's Mission: Revisiting Alternative Visions for Homeless Policy". Urban History Association Conference. Los Angeles, CA. October 9-12.

2024 "Arrested Utopia: Reimagining Planning from the Carceral System". Annual Meeting of the Association of Collegiate School of Planning (ACSP).

- Co-presenter with Samaria Bashar and Dr. Katherine Pérez-Quíñones

“‘I have been blessed with long term tenants’: Residential rental property owners' perceptions of good tenants and long-term tenancy in hot market cities”. Annual Meeting of the Association of Collegiate School of Planning (ACSP).

- Second Author with Dr. Elizabeth Mueller

Teaching Experience

Texas Prison Education Initiative (TPEI)

Fall 2025	Introduction to Urban Studies, Co-Instructor
Fall 2024	Introduction to Economics, Co-Instructor
Spring 2024	Introduction to Urban Studies, Instructor of Record
Fall 2023	Introduction to Urban Studies, Co-Instructor
Spring 2023	Introduction to Urban Studies, Co-Instructor

Invited Lectures

2025	“Systemic Approaches to Eliminating Homelessness”. Presented in the Affordable Housing course, Community and Regional Planning Program, The University of Texas at Austin.
2024	“Introduction to Homeless Services Systems”. Presented in the Affordable Housing course, Community and Regional Planning Program, The University of Texas at Austin.
2023	“Introduction to Homeless Services Systems”. Presented in the Affordable Housing course, Community and Regional Planning Program, The University of Texas at Austin.
	“Homelessness in Urban Politics”. Presented in the Urban Politics course, Community and Regional Planning Program, The University of Texas at Austin.
	“Incorporating Lived-Experience in Homeless Policy”. Presented to the Homeless Solutions Symposium at Iowa State University.

Association Memberships

Member of Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning
Member of Urban Affairs Association
Member of American Society for Public Administration
Member of Urban History Association
Member of the Society for American City and Regional Planning History
Member of the Alliance for Texas History

University and Community Service

2026-present	Board of Directors, Texas Housers
2025-present	Department Organizer, University of Texas Graduate Student Union
2026	Graduate Student Representative on Faculty Search Committee
2017-2025	Board of Directors, Texas Homeless Network. Served as Chair of the Board 2024 and 2025
2022-2024	Editorial Board, <i>Planning Forum</i> . Community and Regional Planning, University of Texas at Austin

Professional Experience

- 2025 **Director of Homeless Initiatives.** New Mexico Office of Housing. Supported the Office of the Governor during the 2025 Regular Legislative Session advising on housing, healthcare, and public safety legislation.
- 2019 - 2021 **Design Project Manager.** University of Texas at Austin, Design Institute for Health. Led research projects including work for the Gates Foundation and Dell Children's Hospital.
- 2017 - 2020 **Service Designer/Program Manager.** City of Austin, Office of Design and Delivery. Led program to co-design projects for people experiencing homelessness in Austin. Supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies.
- 2013 - 2017 **Founding Executive Director.** Farmshare Austin. Established organization to provide organic agricultural education and improve food access in Austin, Texas.
- 2011 - 2012 **Partnership Manager.** CAMBIAR Program, Huaraz, Ancash, Peru. Provided planning and project management for a program to provided civil engineering expertise to Peruvian municipalities that have identified a need for water conservation and environmental projects.
- 2008 - 2016 **Health Care Policy Advisor and Consultant.** Texas Health Care Policy Council, Office of the Governor, and the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. Conducted research and developed policy recommendations for state-wide Health policy with expertise in Health IT and Health Information Exchange. Work supported by grants from HHS and SAMHSA.
- 2006 - 2008 **Research and Evaluation Assistant.** University of Montana and Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC). Supported mixed-methods research and analysis for microfinance programs.