The Dept. of Sociology and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 521 are continuing – No Place Like Home - a community-based research project on the affordable housing crisis in Santa Cruz, and we invite undergrads to participate. Santa Cruz is now the least affordable small city and the city with the highest per capita homelessness in the U.S. How can we make sense of this, both socially and ecologically? How does it impact those that work for and directly serve our community? Who is the housing crisis displacing, and who does it affect most acutely? How is it experienced?

After initial training, students will get out of the classroom and off campus 1-2 times a week, working directly with community partners and applying their research skills in the field. Together we will collect digital surveys, conduct interviews and focus groups, participate in community events, analyze data, create digital maps and more. Spring quarter we will work across the whole county, but focus on the city of Santa Cruz. We will learn how community members experience the housing crisis, focusing on: displacement and gentrification, rent burdens, overcrowding, evictions, discrimination, and how people create a sense of “home” despite crisis.

Enrollment into SOCY 139T-01 is by permission code only. All students interested in enrolling into the course must fill out the course application/survey online: https://tinyurl.com/ybudprsh (You must be signed into your UCSC email to have access). We will review the applications and issue permission codes directly to students until the course is full (60 seats total). There are no specific requirements or previous research experience necessary, but we are looking for the following skills: fluent Spanish; digital mapping; visual documentation skills (photo and/or video); database management; data analysis (quantitative and qualitative). For more information, please email Prof. McKay at smckay@ucsc.edu.