U.S. immigration laws criminalize unauthorized immigrants and render many of immigrants’ daily activities “illegal.” How does this affect immigrants’ attitudes and practices toward the law?

Drawing on interviews with unauthorized Mexican immigrants in Philadelphia, Professor Amada Armenta will show how time spent in the United States transforms migrants’ legal attitudes from one of “resolviendo” (solving problems or getting by) to one of “doing things the right way.” Armenta will highlight the implications of this legal transformation for the moral economy of immigration policy, for immigrant claims-making, and for Latino immigrants’ place in the racial hierarchy.