



# Public Administration Research Colloquium

*Hear leading experts discuss contemporary problems and strategies in public administration research during this bi-weekly event.*

## Social Capital as a Successful Method for Preventing Substance Use

By Ali Unlu, MS, Ph.D. Student

**Thursday, September 18, 2008**

**4:00-5:30 p.m.**

**HPA II – 345**

Light refreshments will be served.

Please RSVP by September 17, Wednesday to Fatih Demiroz at [fdemiroz@mail.ucf.edu](mailto:fdemiroz@mail.ucf.edu).

Substance use, such as alcohol, cigarette, and marijuana, is a threat to the health and well-being of the youth, their families, and society as well. Government supports and implements several programs to protect youth from substance use. The aim of this study is to explain youth behavior with social capital in terms of their social interactions with peers, community, and parents. Social capital refers to individuals embedded in web of social relations and their behaviors guided by social structure. The study focuses on bonding and bridging social capital. The type of activity children participate in, the time and type of activity they interact with their family and the type of peer groups youth interacted with are considered as predictor indicators of youth behavior. This study focuses on the relationship between youth substance use and the impact of parents, peers, and youth activities. The study uses the United States Department of Health and Human Service, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Office of Applied Studies collected in 2006. National Survey on Drug Use and Health was analyzed with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Findings show that there is a relationship between youth substance use and bonding social capital (interactions with close relatives). Correlation varies for age, gender, and ethnicity. The study contributes to the social capital literature and demonstrates social capital as a policy and intervention tool.

*Ali Unlu* has earned his MS degree from School of Justice Studies at Roger Williams University in Rhode Island/ USA. He is currently Graduate Research Assistant at Public Administration Department and Doctoral Student at Public Affairs Department of College of Health and Public Affairs, University of Central Florida. He is a captain in Turkish National Police and he has been working for Istanbul Narcotics Division. He was given the responsibility of implementation of Turkish drug prevention program at schools in Istanbul region. Besides his field experience, he is working on drug prevention methods in response to youth drug use for his doctoral dissertation.

