Dear all,

Whether you are a new or returning student, I hope all of you had a wonderful and relaxing summer and are energized to start the fall semester. During the past spring and summer, we said goodbye to the following students who successfully earned a Master of Arts in Sociology: Jason Foley, Samantha Inocencio, Aquila Ramsey, and Tacy Thorton. Congratulations!

For the department, there are several exciting new developments for this upcoming year. First, a new 18-hour Graduate Certificate in Sociology has been proposed for the graduate program. This certificate will provide another career path for students who need 18 credit hours in Sociology to teach at community colleges and high schools. The 18-hour Graduate Certificate in Sociology is currently going through the approval process.

Second, the Graduate Certificate in Community Development (15 semester credit hours), which was approved last year, is now available for students.

Third, during the 2015 to 2016 academic cycle, the Department provided $12,671 in travel support for 24 graduate and undergraduate students to attend professional meetings. Eight of these students made oral presentations at professional meetings.
Fourth, currently, we are actively searching for candidates to fill two job openings. The first position is a new tenure-track faculty position at the rank of Assistant Professor. The new hire will join the department in Fall 2017 and is expected to teach and conduct research in race and other selected areas. This faculty member will allow the department to further diversify its course offerings for our students. The second open position is the Clinical Professor/Director position of the Internship Program. The selected candidate will set up and manage the forthcoming Sociology Internship Program, with the goal of providing an opportunity for our students to connect with potential employers before they complete their degree.

In summary, I expect 2016-2017 will be another busy and productive year for all of us. Thank you for choosing to be a part of the Department of Sociology at Sam Houston State University. I wish you all a great year ahead and please don’t hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely Yours,

Furjen Deng, Ph. D.
Professor and Chair

Welcome back! I hope that everyone’s semester is off to a good start.

This semester we have eight new students starting their graduate studies in the Sociology Program. I would like to welcome to the Masters Program: Tracy Lentz, Darron Cox, Alice Knuffman, Stephen Johnson, Martecia Cooper, Limesha Hill-Solomon, and Timothy Henigne. Please extend a warm welcome to them.

One of the initiatives we worked on last semester was creating career resources and information. Please see the following section of the SHSU Sociology Website: http://www.shsu.edu/dotAsset/07267d09-eb23-45f6-b494-86354ccfc5.pdf

For this academic year the Sociology Department awarded Nine Scholarships to students in the Masters Program. Congratulations to all of you who have received scholarships! Scholarship applications for the next academic year will be due during the early part of the spring semester.

Currently, the department has eight students working on theses. There is a range of exciting projects including research looking at community development, social media, LGBTQ issues, education, and food deserts, among other issues.
Two students in the Masters Program presented papers last academic year at professional sociological conferences:

Mary Ahlstrom presented at two conferences with SHSU Sociology faculty and undergraduate student.

At the Southern Rural Sociological Association Annual Meeting she co-presented a paper entitled "Community Attachment and Preferred Economic Development Strategies in Rural Texas" with Michael W.P. Fortunato, Gene Theodori, Shannon Lane, and Kristen R. Koci.

At the Annual Meeting of the Rural Sociological Society, she presented a paper entitled "Community attachment and migration intentions in rural Texas" with Michael W.P. Fortunato, Gene Theodori, Shannon Lane, and Kristen R. Koci.

Tim Arthur presented a paper entitled "Perspectives of Young Gay and Bisexual Male Users of Geosocial Dating Applications" Southern Sociological Society's Annual Meeting in April.

We hope to have more students involved presenting research at professional meetings this year. See a list of potential conferences at the end of the newsletter.

At the end of the newsletter is information on important dates, upcoming conferences, and the preliminary schedule of classes for the spring semester. Please note that we are offering two new courses: Sociology 5386: Sociology of Aging with Dr. Hsu and Sociology 6360: Sociology of Education with Dr. Kirk.

I am looking forward to another excellent year of working with everyone.

Samantha Inocencio at Graduation, May 2016
Staff Spotlight: Lila Alvarado
Administrative Associate
Assistant to the Director of Graduate Studies

Originally from Beaumont, I have lived in Huntsville since 2002. I have three wonderful boys who keep me on my toes and the best husband ever who works for Huntsville I.S.D.

I’ve been with Sam Houston State University since September 2015. The thing I love most about my job is the people I work with and the fact that I am always learning something new. You have probably spoken with me already and didn’t even know it! Some of my responsibilities include assisting the Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Konefal, with admissions to the graduate program as well as helping students register for graduate courses.

Student Spotlight: Kaitlin Grant

When I started my path to a sociology career, I knew right away that I had found what I was meant to do. I believe the biggest issue in the world is that people don’t always understand each other and are not aware of social issues within different communities. Sociology gives one the education and the awareness to transform the world into a better place. Through undergraduate and graduate school, I have become more understanding about culture, social issues, and ways to improve our local communities.

I am currently working on my thesis, which involves reaching out to local county leaders about changes to their economic structure over the last twenty years. Gaining local knowledge on the economy is vital for creating better opportunities and socioeconomic transitions through restructuring periods. Once I finish my graduate career, I plan to share my knowledge through teaching and volunteering in my community.

SHSU Sociology Faculty on their way to Graduation
Important Dates

**Comprehensive Exam**: Dates to be Announced. If you are taking your comprehensives this semester, you should have contacted me. If you have not, please do so ASAP.

**Schedule Changes and Dropping Classes**
- Last Day to Drop Classes Without a “Q” Grade: September 9
- Last Day to Drop with a “Q” Grade: November 11

**Spring Scheduling**
- Advising will begin October 24
- Registration Opens: November 7

**Graduation**
- Graduation Application Deadline: September 9
- Commencement: December 9-10

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**Preliminary Spring Schedule**

- Sociology 5314: Social Statistics  
  Dr. Deng
- Sociology 5313: Qualitative Sociology  
  Dr. Hatanaka
- Sociology 5319: Sociological Entrepreneurship  
  Dr. Fortunato
- Sociology 5320: Sociology of Community  
  Dr. Theodori
- Sociology 5351: Seminar in Environmental Sociology  
  Dr. Douglas
- Sociology 5386: Sociology of Aging  
  Dr. Hsu
- Sociology 6360: Sociology of Education  
  Dr. Kirk
Conferences

**American Sociological Association Annual Meeting**: August 12-15, Montreal, Canada. Program information has not been announced yet, but paper and abstract submission is usually in January.

**Rural Sociological Society Annual Meeting**: July 27-30 Columbus, Ohio. Abstract submission is usually during either January or February.

**Southern Sociological Annual Meeting**: March 29-April 1, Greenville, South Carolina. Call for submissions to be published this month.

**Midwest Sociological Society Annual Meeting**: March 30-April 2, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

**Southwest Social Science Association Annual Meeting**: April 12-15, Austin, TX.

**Population Association of America Annual Meeting**: April 27-29, Chicago, IL. Submissions are currently being accepted. The submission process closes on September 29.