

Sociology Graduate Program Newsletter: Spring 2019



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Chair's Column: Dr. Jason Konefal

Dear Graduate Students,

Happy new year to everyone! I would like to welcome all of our returning students back from winter break and new students to the program.

2018 has been a productive year for the Sociology Department. This fall we had four students graduate with their Masters, three successful theses, and one successful completion of the comprehensive exams. Ken Arsenault, a recent alumnus, began his doctorate program in sociology at the University of Massachusetts-Boston and had a co-authored article with Dr. Stykes accepted for publication in a leading sociology journal: *Journal of Marriage and Family*. Congratulations to everyone!

The sociology faculty have also had a tremendously productive year. In addition to providing excellent instruction in their courses, they have been engaged in variety of research projects. This includes research on marriage and the family, community, migration, food and agriculture, the environment, public health, race, inequality, and education, among other areas. Faculty have published three edited books, numerous articles, and a plethora of book chapters. For highlights, please see the [Department's Faculty and Student Achievement Page](#). Dr. Theodori also received a United States Department of Agriculture grant to examine research fatigue in rural communities. This gives the Sociology Department two active USDA grants!



Having faculty with active research programs is important to the quality of the graduate program. Research keeps faculty current in the respective subfields, allows professors to incorporate data and case studies into their classes, and provides research opportunities for students.

I would like to call your attention to an important SHSU resource: [SHSU Career Services](#). They have worked to increase the resources and assistance available to online students. Resources include assistance with job searches, preparing materials, and mock interviews. Mock interview can be done using video technology and students receive personalized feedback from a career counselor. I encourage all of you to take advantage of the resources that career services offer during your time here at SHSU.

Last semester, as part of the graduate proseminar, we started a SHSU sociology LinkedIn Group. While it is still in its infancy, I encourage all of you to set up LinkedIn profiles and join it: Sam Houston Sociology. Invite me to be part of your network and I will invite you to the group. Our hope is to grow this into a resource for current students and alumni.

Thank you for choosing the Sociology Graduate Program at Sam Houston State University. I wish everyone a successful semester. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jason Konefal

Chair of Sociology

The advertisement features a central graphic of a large black arrow pointing upwards, with a yellow path leading to its tip. To the left of the arrow is a green circular sign with the word "GO" in white. The text is arranged around this central graphic. At the top left is the SHSU logo and the text "Department of Sociology, College of Education and Social Studies, SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY". The main title "SOCIOLOGY" is in large red letters, with "Online Master's Degree" in blue below it. Testimonials from students and faculty are included, along with contact information for Dr. Jason Konefal, Director of Graduate Studies, including an email address and phone number. A QR code and the text "Find Us Online" are located at the bottom right.

Department of Sociology
College of Education and Social Studies
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

SOCIOLOGY

Online Master's Degree

Our students say
Our program is challenging and high quality!
Our faculty are accessible, helpful and passionate!

A convenient, flexible program designed for students interested in careers in education, social services and research.
Scholarships available.

For more information contact:
Dr. Jason Konefal
Director of Graduate Studies
jkonef@shsu.edu
936.294.3424

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Graduate Director's Column: Dr. Bart Stykes



Hi folks! I hope that each of you has enjoyed your winter breaks and that you are excited to begin this spring semester. This spring we are welcoming **7** new students to our program. In speaking with Dr. Konefal, I have learned that this our largest spring cohort in recent history.

The department has also said goodbye to a few students who graduated in the December commencement ceremonies. **Congratulations** to our most recent batch of graduates: Kim Jensen, Latrice Leonard, Adam McRoberts, and Rebecca Richards.

Many of our graduate students remain active in conducting primary research. As Dr. Konefal mentioned in his column, three of our most recent graduates (Kim, Latrice, and Rebecca) completed thesis projects last semester. Their projects (which were advised by Dr. Douglas and Dr. Theodori) considered **food deserts**, **civic engagement and delinquency**, and **attitudes about the environment** and drew on a variety of methodological techniques.

Among current students, two are enrolled in our thesis course for Spring 2019 and another three are enrolled in the thesis practicum, where they will develop research proposals and form thesis committees. Our ongoing theses (and theses proposals) are being advised by Dr. Bonanno, Dr. Cabaniss, Dr. Douglas, and me. I would like to congratulate Ansonia Jones, who received word that her class paper (from Dr. Gardner's Race and Ethnicity course) was accepted to the 2019 Annual Meeting of the Southern Sociological Society!

I encourage all current students to apply for the Department of Sociology's Graduate Scholarships. All scholarship applications *must be submitted through Scholarships 4 Kats no later than January 25, 2019*. If you have any questions about submitting your applications, please contact Ms. Tamara Draper (tjd009@shsu.edu).

Please make some time to review the "Important Dates" at the end of the newsletter.

I look forward to working with each of you over the course of this semester!

Join Me in Welcoming our Incoming Students

Below I have taken the liberty of introducing our incoming cohort (based on their letters of intent) for students and faculty/staff who may not be meeting these students in the classroom this spring.

Robert Eary joins our department from Tarleton State University and already has some research experience under his belt. Robert is interested in food waste and media representation of food consumption.

Columba “Cole” Loniello joins us from Winona State University. Cole is interested in pursuing a PhD in sociology and was drawn to our department's quality online program. Cole is interested in social inequality.

Julian Mondesir joins us from the University of Maryland, College Park and currently works with women and children who are survivors of domestic abuse. Julian hopes to counsel survivors of abuse/neglect on completing the MA in Sociology.

Joseph “Joe” Nall joins us from Polk State College. Joe was influenced by Marx at a young age and has already devoted substantial time to grassroots organization that draws attention to power structures. Joe was drawn to SHSU given our focus on *Public Sociology*.

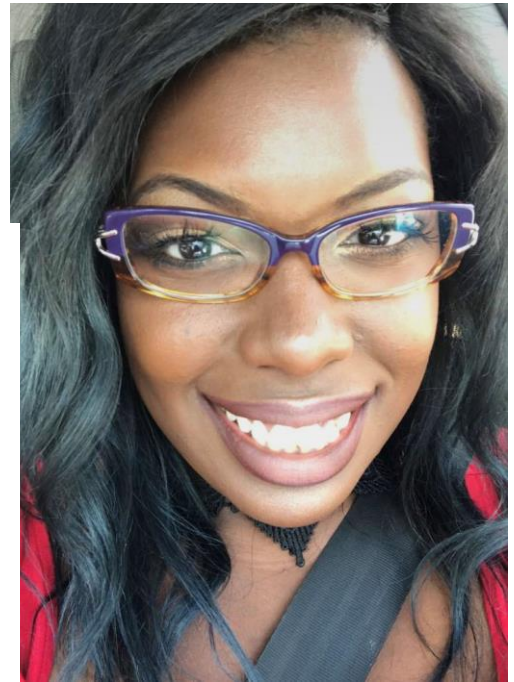
Ashley Segura is a former Bearkat, from our own department, who has chosen to continue study in sociology. Ashley wants to pursue a PhD and is interested in topics tied to gender inequality and migration.

Jasmine Session is also a former Bearkat, who has chosen to continue graduate studies at SHSU. Jasmine currently works for the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) and wants to remain a public servant with more career options on completing the MA in Sociology.

Alexis “Lexi” Trimble joins us from the University of Texas at Tyler and is passionate about social inequality, community policy, and social change. On completing the MA, Lexi hopes to conduct research for documentaries that address social inequality and change.

Alumnus Spotlight: Crystal Brown

Ms. Brown is one of our former graduate students, and she teaches a number of undergraduate courses in our department (e.g., Introduction to Ethnic Studies, Social Problems, Sociology of Sport, etc.). She is always excited to talk about engaging students through creative learning activities as well as issues related to social justice and structural inequality. Below, she has provided a blurb about her own experiences as both an undergraduate and graduate student in our program.



When I first came to Sam Houston, I was unsure of what I wanted my major to be. I was a first-generation college student and did not consider myself an academic. I faced many of the challenges that first-generation students face. For the first two years of college, I walked from the poorest parts of town to Sam Houston State University. It was not until I took a required course in sociology that I unlocked my academic calling. As an undergraduate, I met sociology professors who inspired me and believed in me. I attended conferences, was mentored under the REU experience for undergraduates, and became a member of the sociological honor society, AKD. I decided to enroll in the Masters of Arts program because I knew I still needed to learn. The sociology graduate program helped to refine me. In graduate school, I went from learning about sociology to becoming a sociologist. I applied the principles given to me. Sociology was now in action. Under this program, I began community work. The city of Huntsville created safer pathways to school based on the research I conducted over disadvantaged school children. In 2012, I joined the Sociology Department at Sam Houston State as a Lecturer. My passion is sharing the tools given to me. In addition to teaching, I now sponsor young women in conducting charity work and mentorship. It was Friedrich Nietzsche who stated, "The individual has always had to struggle to keep from being overwhelmed by the tribe. If you try it, you will be lonely often, and sometimes frightened. But no price is too high to pay for the privilege of owning yourself." This program has taught me how to struggle with complex ideas, but most importantly the power that I have as an individual and the influence we all have in the world around us.

Important Dates

Apply for Graduation: February 1. If you intend to graduate this semester, you must apply for graduation ([click here](#)).

Comprehensive Exam: March 18 – April 1. If you are taking your comprehensive exams this semester, you **must** email me (jstykes@shsu.edu) *no later than January 30*.

Schedule Changes and Dropping Classes

Last Day to Drop with a "Q" Grade: April 5

Fall/Summer and Scheduling

Advising will begin March 18

- Advising slots will be scheduled using SignUpGenius.com

Registration Opens for Fall/Summer: April 8

Graduation

Commencement: May 9-11

For thesis deadlines, please consult the [Academic Calendar](#).



Sociology for the People

Preliminary Summer and Fall 2019 Schedules

Summer I

SOCI 5331 (one section): Sociology of the Family with Dr. Stykes

Summer II

SOCI 5337 (one section): Gender and Society with Dr. Cabaniss

Fall

Courses in the Core

SOCI 5100 (one section): Proseminar in Sociology with Dr. Stykes

SOCI 5310 (two sections): Seminar in Sociological Theory with Dr. Bonanno

SOCI 5312 (two sections): Seminar in Sociological Research with Dr. Stykes

SOCI 5314 (one section): Social Statistics with Dr. Deng

Electives

SOCI 5322 (one section): Seminar in Medical Sociology with Dr. Choi

SOCI 5333 (one section): Sociology of Religion with Dr. Kirk

SOCI 5351 (one section): Seminar in Environmental Sociology with Dr. Douglas