Find out more about the students who completed a Sociology degree in Fall 2014. We are very proud of their hard work and dedication!

Check out the conferences that our students and faculty attended this fall/winter and learn what they presented.

Learn about Dr. George Yancey’s faculty development leave opportunity as well as Dr. Dale Yeatts return from medical leave.

We have such talented students! Stories in this section recognize our graduate students, including Michael Nino’s new job opportunity and Swati’s Singh’s successful dissertation defense. Also, hear about the newest member of the sociology family, Holden Dean Bush!

Hear how Dr. Wheeler Pulliam, recent sociology graduate, uses skills from his PhD program in the private sector.

Learn how you can make a direct impact on the UNT Sociology Department through your contribution.

This newsletter is published three times annually, during the fall, spring, & summer semesters.
At the December 2014 graduation, a total of 46 students walked with a degree in Sociology, including 1 Ph.D., 1 Masters of Arts, 8 Masters of Science, and 36 Bachelor of Arts. The Ph.D. graduates include:

**Swati Singh, Ph.D.**  
Major Professor: Cynthia Cready  
Dissertation: “Microcredit, women, and empowerment: Evidence from India.”

The Masters graduates include:

- Devyn Dougherty, M.A.  
- Chana P. Avezbadalov, M.S.  
- Juliet H. Boxer, M.S.  
- Aliza Burg, M.S.  
- Lisa S. Danesh, M.S.

The Bachelor of Arts graduates include:

- Kristina M. Agee  
- Adam S. Araiza  
- Aaron L. Belalzin  
- Sonya A. Bustillos  
- Frederick A. Byers III  
- Carl W. Caldwell, Jr.  
- Candace Cho  
- Jazmine A. Coats  
- Maria M. Coco  
- Griselda M.D. Garcia  
- Darryl Han Du  
- Carolyn A. Egan  
- Deborah J. Fessenden  
- Colin T. Fouts  
- Angie L. Guerra  
- William D. Haseman  
- Ricky W. Holtzlander  
- Kinnard C. Maney  
- Brett N. McCoy  
- Dolline Men  
- Brent T. Miller  
- Karen L.M. Martinez  
- Gerren Cortez Odum  
- Michelle Owuzu-Hemeng  
- Leila E. Puckett  
- Reanon A. Sandlin  
- Monique Lanette Scott  
- Kristin Leigh Sharp  
- LaKisha Nicole Swope  
- Mark H. Wagner  
- Jared Thomas Wahlen  
- Dollinda Latrice Welch  
- Dimitri J. Wilhite  
- Donna R. Wilson  
- Charles R. Wright  
- Irae Yoo

Photo shown: Dr. Swati Singh at the Fall hooding ceremony (Photo by Gabe Ignatow)
Meet the Front Desk Staff!

**Aaliyah Holiday**

Meet **Aaliyah Holiday**! She is originally from Houston, TX, and she is a junior majoring in Human Services. She started working for the Sociology department in Spring 2014 as a college work-study student. Her duties include answering the phone, making copies for professors, and organizing things at the front desk. Plus, she is a whiz at fixing the copier! She plans to graduate in May 2015 and start her MSW at the University of Houston. An interesting fact about Aaliyah is she was in choir for 6 years, and music is still important to her today. Stop by the front desk to meet Aaliyah!

**Austin Hendren**

Meet **Austin Hendren**! She is originally from Kamiah, Idaho, and she is a sophomore majoring in Biology. She began working in the Sociology Department during the Fall 2014 semester. She describes her job duties as answering the phone, making trips to get the mail, and entertaining Fonda when the office is slow. She plans to graduate from UNT in May 2017 and attend PA school after graduation. Her hobbies include volunteering, watching Netflix, and shopping online. When asked to share something interesting about herself, she said “Even though I’m from Idaho, I’ve never grown potatoes.” Stop by the front desk to say hi to Austin!
This scholarship is established to provide assistance to non-traditional students in the Department of Sociology. To be eligible, applicants must:

- Be an undergraduate OR graduate student at UNT (may be either full or part-time);
- Meet the entrance and continuing academic performance standards of the Department of Sociology in effect at the time of the award;
- Maintain enrollment in good standing at UNT; and
- Enroll as a student in Sociology at UNT or anticipate enrollment for the following semester

Preference will be given to persons who indicate in writing that they are female, non-traditional students, attending college after an absence of at least five years due to care giving or other responsibilities; additional preference will be given to students who indicate that they have not worked full time during this absence.

Award amounts are decided by the Sociology Scholarship Committee and are subject to availability of funds. Applications for Sociology Departmental Scholarships are due April 15, 2015. Visit the UNT Sociology website for more information.

Support the UNT Sociology Department

The Department of Sociology appreciates your financial support. Every dollar contributed to the department has a direct impact on our students, many in the form of scholarships. To make a donation, click here.
In early November, three members of the department presented posters at the annual meeting of The Gerontological Society of America in Washington, DC. **Dr. Cynthia M. Cready** and graduate student **Cassie Hudson** presented “The Influence of Shared Decision-making with Nurse Aides on Nurse Job Satisfaction and Performance” (co-authored by **Cynthia M. Cready, Cassie Hudson**, Katherine Dreyer (UNT Partnerships for Strong Communities), and **Dale E. Yeatts**).

**Dr. Gul Seckin** presented two posters, “Digitally Literate: Psychometric Validation of Electronic Health Literacy Scale (EHLS)” and “Age Differences in Perceived Benefits of Receiving Psycho-Oncological Support on the Internet: Optimism and Positive Self-Image.”

*Photos: (left) Gul Seckin, (right) Cynthia Cready & Cassie Hudson (photos by Cynthia Cready)*
Gabe Ignatow Attends Conference at Oxford on Ethics & Virtue

In early January, Dr. Gabe Ignatow presented at the third annual conference of the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, which was held at Oriel College at the University of Oxford in Oxford, England. The aim of the conference is to bring together experts from a range of disciplines to explore the varieties of virtue ethics, both within and across disciplinary boundaries. Gabe gave a presentation titled “How to Study Morality Online” in which he reviewed state-of-the-art research methods for studying moral discourses and deliberations in online environments including online surveys, virtual ethnography, and text analysis. While in London, Dr. Ignatow visited the former home of Friederich Engels on Primrose Hill, where Engels lived from 1870-1894.

To learn more about this conference, click here.

Photo: Gabe Ignatow (left) & Leslie Sklair, Professor Emeritus from the London University of Economics and Political Science (right). (Photo by Gabe Ignatow.)

Other Recent Presentations & Publications


(Continued on Next Page)
Other Recent Presentations & Publications


For the fall of 2015, Dr. George Yancey has been awarded faculty developmental leave from the Office of the Provost and VP for Academic Affairs. He will use this semester of leave to write a book about the social biases of media personnel. He will examine whether the alteration of key social characteristics (i.e. race, gender, religion) of the potential story alters willingness of reporters or editors in newspaper, online, and broadcast media, to publish the story. To collect his data, Dr. Yancey will use surveys that ask media personnel about 11 different news story scenarios, in which they can respond whether they think the story should be used 1) On the front page 2) In the front section but not front page 3) In the local section 4) A small news brief, but not a full story 5) Not used at all.

Faculty development leaves (FDL) at UNT are authorized for the general purpose of increasing the value of the recipient's sustained contribution to the university by providing the individual an opportunity for professional growth. Development leave may be granted, upon application, for study, research, writing, field observations, or other suitable purposes. Developmental leave provides opportunities for additional training and improving skills. To be eligible for FDL, a full-time faculty member or librarian must have served the University for at least six consecutive academic years following initial appointment or the most recent FDL, and not be in the terminal year of UNT employment.

To learn more about UNT FDL, click here.
Dr. Dale Yeatts was on medical leave during the Fall 2014 semester due to a diagnosis of lymphoma, or cancer within the lymph nodes. He is appreciative of all the emails, get-well cards, and prayers. He says his treatments have been working well, and as a result, the cancer is gone except for a spot on his spleen, which is getting smaller. Dale is looking forward to his return to teaching, research, and service in the spring 2015 semester. In fact, he presented on January 16 at UNT’s International Community Sustainability and Professional Exchange Conference. His presentation focused on factors that affect the adoption of energy-efficient technologies. Click here for more information about the conference, which included presentations from UNT Sociology faculty member, Nicole Dash, and UNT Sociology graduate students, Reza Amini and Ozgur Solakoglu, and former UNT Sociology graduate students, Iftekhar Amin (Assistant Professor, UNT-Dallas) and Jesmin Syeda (Assistant Professor, UNT-Dallas). We are happy to welcome you back, Dr. Yeatts!

Gabe Ignatow Contracted to Write Book on Text Mining

With co-author Rada Mihalcea, Dr. Gabe Ignatow has been contracted with Sage publications to write Text Mining and Analysis: An Advanced Introduction. In this book, Gabe emphasizes that social media sites generate massive volumes of natural language data that are available for research, yet are not being taken advantage of by social scientists. This book will provide a practical guide to text mining and analysis for both new and experienced researchers.
PhD Candidate, Michael Niño, Accepts Tenure Track Position at Willamette University

Michael Niño, Sociology doctoral candidate and teaching fellow, accepted a tenure-track position in the Department of Sociology at Willamette University. Willamette is a nationally ranked, highly selective private liberal arts university in Salem, Oregon. Founded in 1842, Willamette is the oldest college on the West Coast and has been nationally recognized for its civic engagement and sustainability efforts. Michael will join the Willamette faculty as an Assistant Professor of Sociology this fall and will be primarily responsible for teaching medical sociology, Latino/a sociology, and quantitative methods. Congratulations, Michael!

Congratulations to Alex & Alex Bush on the Birth of their Baby Boy!

On January 6, 2015 at 7:25pm, Sociology graduate student Alex Bush and her husband, Alex, welcomed their new son, Holden Dean Bush, weighing 7lbs 1oz and measuring 19.75 inches. Mom and baby are doing well and are settling in at home. Alex plans to stop by the office in a few weeks to visit with Baby Holden. The Sociology Department is extremely happy for them and wishes their new family the best! Alex is a masters pass-through student in her 2nd year of the program. Click here to send Alex a congratulatory email.
Fall Graduate, Swati Singh, Studies the Effect of Microfinance on the Social Standing of Women in India

In December, Dr. Swati Singh graduated from the Sociology Department after defending her dissertation, “Microcredit, Women, & Empowerment: Evidence from India.” According to Swati, one of the stated goals of microfinance programs is to increase the bargaining power of women within the household. However, little is known about other ways women in patriarchal communities may be affected by these programs. Swati’s dissertation sheds light on the effects of microfinance programs on the personal and social lives of Indian women participating in these programs. Local as well as national level impacts of microfinance programs on women member’s social networks, access to public spaces, and their decision making at home are examined in three related studies. In January of 2014, Swati published a paper from her dissertation in Gender, Place, & Culture, entitled “The effects of microfinance programs on women members in traditional societies.” She also has a paper currently in press, coauthored by Cynthia Cready, entitled “Microloans and Women’s Freedom of Physical Mobility: Evidence from India.” She will serve as an adjunct lecturer at Southern Methodist University for the spring 2015 semester, teaching Global Sociology. Congratulations, Swati!

Graduate Student Council (GSC) Spring 2015 Calendar of Events

The Graduate Student Council (GSC) is a diverse body of students representing the colleges and schools of the University of North Texas. The Council serves as an active voice for UNT graduate students, representing graduate concerns to the faculty, administration, and the state government.

January 23rd—Graduate Student Welcome Back Happy Hour
Public House on Fry Street, 5pm

February 1st—Super Bowl Party (Potluck & Family Friendly)
Colorado Courts Apartments in Denton, 5pm

April 6-10th—Graduate Student Appreciation Week— All week there will be free food and various activities for graduate students.

April 8-10th— GSC will travel to Austin to speak with state legislators about graduate student debt and other education policy. Join them in Austin!

April 11th—Starry Night in the Square
Denton Downtown Square, 7pm

For more information on GSC or any of these events, contact Sociology PhD student, Jacquie Cheun, or visit the GSC website.
Recent Grad, Wheeler Pulliam, Uses Sociological Skills in the Private Sector

Recent Sociology graduate, Dr. Wheeler Pulliam currently serves as the Head of Sales for Osram Sylvania Lighting, the second largest lighting company in the world, headquartered in Munich, Germany. In his position, Wheeler leads a sales and product management staff charged with increasing revenue by driving product acceptance in the North and South American marketplace. Wheeler says his doctoral degree in sociology has helped him tremendously in his private sector job. Specifically, he mentions that “my scholastic focus on culture and organizational management has often times afforded me the ability to communicate quantifiably to executive management what variables both in the marketplace and internally affect company growth and success.” In fact, based on disruptive technology theory, he recently conducted an ANOVA analysis to show what variables significantly affected company revenue growth, leading to a change in company sales policy. In addition, he believes that his PhD in sociology has helped him to be a better leader and mentor to his team. “By explaining matters empirically, my subordinates are able to see the bigger picture and “buy-in” to what we have to do. It is no longer just a matter of opinion.”

Despite his non-academic position, Wheeler continues to work on sociological research. He has submitted a paper for publication recently on disruptive technology, and is also working on a papers that examines job satisfaction in South Korean companies and one that focuses on female discrimination in South Korean workplaces. In addition, he hopes to publish a book in the near future.
There are many ways to support the UNT Sociology department. Financial contributions are most welcome, but we also appreciate our alumni who give their time to speak to our current students and new graduates by providing advice about careers in specific areas.

Consider Making a Donation

The Department of Sociology appreciates your financial support. Every dollar contributed to the department has a direct impact on our students. Your gift helps support critical opportunities for students, including scholarships, lectures, travel support, and any number of educational events that augment the classroom experience. For more information about additional ways you can help, please contact Dan Rodeheaver, Chair of the Department, or Fonda Gaynier, Administrative Coordinator, at (940) 565-2296. Read more about Sociology scholarships in the Departmental News section of this newsletter. To donate now, click the icon below.