Click on the links below to explore recent news from UNT’s Sociology Department

Departmental News
Find out more about the 95 students who completed a Sociology degree in Spring 2014. We are very proud of their hard work and dedication! Also, read about the new Latino & Mexican American Studies Certificate at UNT.

Research News
Get a quick overview of the 94th annual SSSA conference and those who participated. Plus, check out some upcoming conferences our graduate students are attending this summer.

Faculty News
Learn about Dr. George Yancey’s new research on height and romantic coupling. Is height important in matters of the heart? Also, Dr. Dale Yeatt’s begins a new project related to humans’ adoption of sustainable technologies.

Student News
Read about the work of two doctoral students, Konstantinos Zougris & Reza Amini, who were recently awarded the prestigious Toulouse Graduate School Thesis and Dissertation Fellowship.

Alumni News
Recent UNT graduate, Dr. Joseph Comeau elected Secretary/Treasurer of the Southwestern Sociological Association (SSA).

Donate
Learn how you can make a direct impact on the UNT Sociology Department through your contribution.
The Department of Sociology continues to have one of the largest groups of graduates at UNT. On May 9th & 10th, a total of 96 students graduated including 75 undergraduates and 22 graduate students. Of the graduate students, 2 completed a Master of Arts, 15 completed a Master of Science, and 5 completed a Ph.D. in Sociology. The Ph.D. graduates include:

**Spencer Arcadia, Ph.D.**
Major Professors: Nicole Dash & Brenda McCoy  
Dissertation: Exploratory Analysis of Social E-Health Behavior

**Corinne Ong, Ph.D.**
Major Professor: Dan Rodeheaver  
Dissertation: Energy Paths and Political Commitments: Their Roles in Environmental Inequality

**Myron Strong, Ph.D.**
Major Professor: George Yancey  
Dissertation: Exploring the Gender Role Ideology of Black and White Men between Ages 18-30

**Qi Sun, Ph.D.**
Major Professor: David Williamson & Rudy Seward  
Dissertation: Assessing Social Determinants of Severe Mental Illness in High-Risk Groups

The Masters graduates include: Jamie Aguilar, Esther Baron, Monica Files, Daniel Fund, Lindsey Johnson, Erdem Karai, Dina Kessler, Liza Kramer, Malka Labell, Grace Levitan, Bodour Yousef, Nathan Schwarz, Jennifer Skolnick, Gershon Swimmer, Sharada Wilson, Jessica Wolfe, & Nechama Zimmerman.

*Photo shown: Alicia Brunson, Ph.D. also walked in the Spring graduation, although she earned her degree in Fall 2013.*
Summer 2014 Courses Offered

Undergraduate:

3 Week 1
- Multiracial Families
- Sociology of Religion
- Internet & Society
- Sociology of Aging

8 Week 1
- Health & Illness
- Quantitative Data Collection
- Qualitative Data Collection
- Quantitative Data Analysis

5 Week 1
- Intro to Sociology
- Marriage & Family
- Social Stratification
- Gender & Society
- Social Psychology
- Community Organization
- World Populations

5 Week 2
- Intro to Sociology
- Social Problems
- Sociological Theory
- Urban Sociology
- Sociology of Sexuality
- Race & Ethnic Minorities
- Sociology Capstone

Graduate:

- Internet & Society
- Text Analysis

Spring 2014 Graduation Continued...

The 75 Bachelors graduates include:

Shalon Alyce           Taylor Hayes           Alyssa Palmer
Billy Barber II       Angelica Hernandez     Renee Palmer
Mary Beach            Andrew Hilburn         Deandrea Payne
Derek Bell            Heather Horne          Parker Price
Aaron Bellazin        Madison Jackson       Kaneisha Punch
Wesley Brady          Brandon Johnson        Cameron Rockwell
Denicia Briggs        Jessica Johnson        Alannah Rodenberg
Maria Brown           Jacob Jones            Brenda Rojas
Joshua Cline          Blake Judson           Selena Rueda
Amanda Conner         Trevor Kennedy         Mary Ryan
Alex Cowen            Molly Kirkland          Katherine Sabel
Briana Crowe          Yixiong Ma             Karina Sanchez
Ashley Davis          Jonathan Machina       Magan Saye
Shelby Davis          Paul Mart            Manuel Soza
Lori Dickinson         Dolline Men           Coleman Spencer
Derrick Dike           Brenna Milnar         Adrian Stephens
Jill Dodson            Tyrone Nash          Stephanie Taub
Sarah Echevarria       Maria-Vivian Vallar  Mario-Vivian Vallar
Precious Femi-Ogunyemi  Victoria Nava        Van Vandergriff
Desiree Forsythe       Charles Neagle        Yadira Vazquez
Elizabeth Foster       Maria Nguyen           Adrianne Victorian
Chelsea Goldston       Zachery Olen         Stephen Ware
Corina Gomez           Dylan Oliver          James West
Anisha Gurung          Melena Ornelas        Alzee Williams
Leslie Hayes           Joanie Paley         Michelle Young

FUN FACTS: DID YOU KNOW??

The UNT Sociology Department is located on the 3rd floor of Chilton Hall. The building was constructed in 1938 and is named after Joshua Crittenden Chilton, the first president of Texas Normal College (now UNT).
Sociology Courses Offered as Part of UNT Latino and Mexican-American Studies (LMAS) Certificate

The Latina/o and Mexican-American Studies (LMAS) Program Initiative started in the Fall 2013 under the sponsorship of Dr. Yolanda Flores Niemann, Senior Vice-Provost, Provost and VP Academic Affairs of UNT. The initiative will provide students with a competitive edge in a globalized economy, including skills and abilities to understand the diversity, complexity, history, politics, sociology, and culture of LMAS communities. With this new certificate, UNT is responding to this need through programmatic and curricular development. Two Sociology courses (SOCI 4540 Race & Ethnic Minorities; SOCI 4580 Immigration and Race) will be included as electives for undergraduate students completing the LMAS Certificate. For more information on the certificate, click here.

Featured Scholarship: The Rudy Ray and Jean Ann Seward Scholarship

This scholarship is awarded to Sociology graduate students who meet and exceed the entrance and continuing academic performance standards of the College of Arts and Sciences and Department of Sociology. The student must maintain six or more graduate semester hours at UNT; demonstrate leadership in the field of higher education or the potential for leadership in the field; and maintain a 3.0 GPA.

The scholarship is partly named for Rudy Ray Seward, Professor Emeritus and former Associate Chair of the Sociology Department. Dr. Seward came to North Texas State University (now UNT) in the Fall of 1974. Since then, he has chaired more than 40 doctoral and master’s student committees and has prepared and taught more than 15 different courses in his 40 years at UNT.

Scholarships Available

Undergraduate:
- Leonard G. Benson Scholarship
- Elizabeth Esterchild Scholarship
- Lynne Killgore Scholarship
- Rudy and Jean Seward Scholarship
- Sociology Undergraduate Scholarship

Graduate:
- Alvin C. Dorse Scholarship
- Elizabeth Esterchild Scholarship
- Hiram J. Friedsam Scholarship
- Lynne Killgore Scholarship
- David Malone Scholarship
- Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Scholarship
- Rudy and Jean Seward Scholarship
- Mary Rose Holley Scholarship
UNT Faculty & Students Participate in the 94th Annual Meeting of the Southwestern Social Science Association (SSSA) in San Antonio, TX

UNT Sociology faculty and students recently attended the 94th annual meeting of the Southwestern Social Science Association (SSSA) in San Antonio, TX from March 17—19, 2014. The theme for this year’s meeting was “The Evolving and Everlasting Social Sciences.”


Graduate students, Jacob Huang and Cassie Hudson, working the UNT information booth at SSSA.
Graduate Students Chosen to Present at National Conferences during Summer 2014

During the summer of 2014, Sociology graduate students will be busy with national conference presentations. In August, doctoral students Michael Niño, Swati Singh, and Ozgur Solakoglu and recent PhD graduate, Corinne Ong will present at the 110th Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association in San Francisco, California. They will present the following papers:

Niño, Michael & Tianji Cai. “The Effects of Youth Social Withdrawal on Alcohol, Cigarette, and Illicit Drug Use”


Solakoglu, Ozgur. “Fear of Crimes Affecting Elderly People in The Context of Different Cultures: A Case Study, Turkey”

Also during the summer, Sociology doctoral students Nichola Driver and Michael Niño will present at the 11th Annual Add Health Users Conference at the National Institute of Health campus in Bethesda, MD. The principal goal of the conference is to give researchers who are working with data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) an opportunity to share research goals, experiences, and results. Both Nichola and Michael were awarded stipends from UNC at Chapel Hill to attend the conference. To learn more about the Add Health Users Conference, click here.

Driver, Nichola. “The Influence of Neighborhood Composition on Condom Use among Young Adults”


Scholarships Available

Undergraduate:
Leonard G. Benson Scholarship
Elizabeth Esterchild Scholarship
Lynne Killgore Scholarship
Rudy and Jean Seward Scholarship
Sociology Undergraduate Scholarship

Graduate:
Alvin C. Dorse Scholarship
Elizabeth Esterchild Scholarship
Hiram J. Friedsam Scholarship
Lynne Killgore Scholarship
David Malone Scholarship
Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Scholarship
Rudy and Jean Seward Scholarship
Mary Rose Holley Scholarship
Doctoral Student, Cassie Hudson Castillo, Wins Second Place at the UNT Graduate Exhibition

Please join the department in congratulating Cassie Hudson Castillo for her second place win in the Social and Behavioral Sciences poster competition at the Toulouse Graduate School Graduate Exhibition. Cassie's presentation was titled, "Support for Border Security among Latinos: Does Immigration Status and Time Spent in the U.S. Matter?" The event was hosted on March 1, 2014, and it is co-sponsored by the Toulouse Graduate School and the Graduate Student Council. The Graduate Exhibition places special emphasis on communicating research and creative endeavors to a general audience and offers an unusual opportunity for professional development by challenging graduate students to present their work in clear, comprehensible terms to people outside their fields. Other graduate students who participated in the event, as presenters or judges, were: Alex Bush-Vaselka, Shae Jefferies, Jacob Huang, Ozgur Solakoglu, & Dr. Michael Thompson. To learn more about the Graduate Research Exhibition, click here.

Sociology Undergraduate Students Present Original Research at UNT Scholars Day!

The Sociology Department had a resounding presence this year at the UNT University Scholars Day where 22 undergraduate students presented at the research competition. Sponsored by the UNT Honors College, but open to all UNT students who are earning bachelor's degrees, Scholars Day gives students a chance to present their research in the same way that faculty members and other professionals present their research at conferences, either through display of research posters or by giving oral research paper presentations.

This year's Scholars Day took place from on April 17. Students were judged for their paper and poster presentations, and first-, second- and third-place cash prizes were awarded for both papers and posters. (Continued on following page).
UNT Scholars Day Continued...

The Sociology students were led by the mentorship of Sociology faculty member, Dr. Michael Thompson and doctoral students, Michael Niño & Ozgur Solakoglu.

Non-traditional Family Structures and Sexual Offending: Evidence from the New Family Structures Study Katie Beach & Madison Jackson

Educated but not Insured? Assessing Government Programs for College Health Amanda Conner, Precious Femi-Ogunyemi, & Zachery Olen

Everyday Low Prices Jonathan Miles, Derek Bell, & Charles Neagle

Do You Really Believe in That? The Effect Religion has on Personal Sexual Behaviors Shelby Beasley & Briana Crowe

Limitations of Assessment-Driven Learning: Instructor Agency and Constraints Dylan Oliver & Jonathan Machina

A Dying Crisis: Examining the Relationship Between STDs, Sexual Abuse, and Suicide. Nohemi Ponce


The Aftermath of Coming Out: Coping with a Homosexual Identity Desiree Forsythe & Jessica Johnson

How Divorce Correlates to Students’ Decision Making Jackie Miller, Brandon Johnson, & Isabel Mendoza

To learn more about UNT Scholars Day, click here.
Conference Presentations

Dan Rodeheaver participated in two presentations at the The Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, which took place in February in Philadelphia, PA. “Intimate Partner Homicide in Texas: A Modified Strain Theory Approach” (co-authored with Dr. Jim Williams, TWU) and “Intimate Partner Homicide Rates in Chicago, 1988 to 1992: A Modified General Strain Theory Approach” (co-authored with Natalie Johnson, Dalton State College, and Dr. Jim Williams, TWU)

Ami Moore presented at the Population Association of America Annual Meeting in Boston in May. She presented “Sexual Risk Behavior and Sexual Identity Among Men Who Have Sex With Men in Ghana and Togo” (co-authored with doctoral student, Nichola Driver)

Corinne Ong participated in the annual meeting of the Southern Anthropological Association during March in Cherokee, North Carolina. Along with other colleagues, she presented “Patterns of Political Economy in Cultures Post-disaster.” Corinne also presented a paper at the Southern Sociological Association Annual Meeting in April in Charlotte, NC. The paper was titled “Economic Globalization and Child Mortality.”

Recent Faculty & Student Publications


Is height important in matters of the heart? According to George Yancey and co-author, Michael Emerson, the height of a potential partner matters more to women than men, and mostly for femininity and protection. The study, "Does Height Matter? An Examination of Height Preferences in Romantic Coupling," was conducted in two parts. Part one, which used data from the Yahoo! personal dating advertisements of 455 males (average height of 5 feet 8 inches and average age of 36 years) and 470 females (average height of 5 feet 4 inches and average age of 35 years) from throughout the U.S., found that 13.5 percent of the men wanted to date only women shorter than they are. In contrast, nearly half of the women – 48.9 percent – wanted to date only men taller than they are. "Evolutionary psychology theory argues that 'similarity is overwhelmingly the rule in human mating,'” said Michael Emerson, the Allyn and Gladys Cline Professor of Sociology, co-director of Rice's Kinder Institute for Urban Research and the study's co-author. "However, our study suggests that for physical features such as height, similarity is not the dominant rule, especially with females." The second part of the study included 54 male (average height of 5 feet 9 inches) and 131 female volunteers (average height of 5 feet 4 inches) recruited from a U.S. university. The participants answered open-ended questions in an online survey. The findings were similar to the first part of the study: 37 percent of male respondents wanted to date only women shorter than they are, while 55 percent of female respondents wanted to date only (Continued)
plained by traditional societal expectations and gender stereotypes. He noted that it is a widespread perception that tall height is a personal asset for men and a personal liability for women. He said that the study's finding that height matters more to women supports the social system of patriarchy, in which males are the primary authority figures. "The masculine ability to offer physical protection is clearly connected to the gender stereotype of men as protectors," he said. "And in a society that encourages men to be dominant and women to be submissive, having the image of tall men hovering over short women reinforces this value." The study was published in the Journal of Family Issues and is available online. The study was funded by Rice University.

Related Materials: George Yancey bio Michael Emerson bio Michael Emerson is the Allyn and Gladys Cline Professor of Sociology in the School of Social Sciences at Rice University. He also serves as co-director for the Kinder Institute for Urban Research.
Sociology Department Hires New Faculty Member, Gul Seckin

The Department is pleased to welcome its newest faculty member, **Gul Seckin**, who will begin in Fall 2014. She received a B.A. in Counseling Psychology from Bosphorus University (Istanbul, Turkey). She also received her Master’s in Gerontology from the University of Southern California and Ph.D. in Medical Sociology from the Case Western Reserve University in 2006.

Gabe Ignatow Delivers Keynote Address in NYC

In April, **Gabe Ignatow** delivered the keynote address at The New School for Social Research Sociology Conference in New York City. The theme of the conference was “Being There: Phenomenology and Social Structures.” He addressed the topic of Hermeneutics and realism in the digital era.

Dale Yeatts Studies the Diffusion of Energy Efficient Technologies

**Dale Yeatts** is currently working with a network of researchers, including engineers, chemists, and physics professors, to study energy efficient buildings. His part of the study is to investigate the factors/conditions affecting the adoption of these new technologies by residents and builders. For this project, he will be involved in writing a grant along with Dr. Yong Tao (UNT Mechanical Engineering) and Dr. Stan Ignman (UNT Gerontology). He will present his paper titled “Diffusion of Energy Efficient Technologies: Factors Enhancing and Inhibiting the Adoption of New Innovations in Buildings” on May 28 at UNC-Charlotte. Students that are involved in the project include two Sociology doctoral students, **Christy Cooksey** and **Reza Amini**, and two recently graduated Sociology BA students, **Precious Femi-Oqunyemi** and **Aaron Majek**.
Two Sociology Doctoral Students Awarded the Prestigious Thesis and Dissertation Fellowship

The Thesis and Dissertation Fellowship (TDF) from the UNT Toulouse Graduate School is a highly competitive award that supports outstanding masters or doctoral students who have achieved candidacy and are in the last year of their thesis or dissertation. The fellowship is awarded for a one-year period and includes a stipend, coverage of tuition and fees, as well as health benefits for the recipient. This year, two Sociology doctoral students received the fellowship, Konstantinos Zougris and Reza Amini.

Konstantinos Zougris is a fourth year doctoral student from Greece with Masters degrees in Sociology and Economics and a Bachelors degrees in Business Administration, Management, and Economics. During his time in the Sociology program at UNT, his research has focused on global/comparative sociology and social stratification with an emphasis on global inequality, economic sociology, and the EU systemic crisis.

His dissertation’s fundamental objective is to develop a mixed method design that combines and simultaneously implements data mining, textual data analysis, and advanced quantitative techniques. Two independent sociological case studies will be conducted in the process of validating the proposed mixed method. The first case study examines the role of media in opinion polarization between groups of different ideological orientations. The second case study, considering institutional theory as a priori, will compare different schools of sociological thought attempting to identify topic patterns, topic convergent/divergent tendencies and develop a network of associated topics in cross sectional settings.

Konstantinos works under the direction of Drs. Gabe Ignatow, Dan Rodeheaver, and Nick Evangelopoulis (College of Business).
Thesis & Dissertation Fellowship Continued..

Reza Amini was also awarded the prestigious Toulouse Graduate School Thesis & Dissertation Fellowship. Reza is a third year doctoral student from Iran who holds a Medical Degree (MD) as well as a Master of Public Health (MPH). He has previously worked as a general practitioner as well as Director of Research Division at the Medical and Engineering Research Center in Iran. While in the Sociology Department at UNT, his research has largely focused on gerontology, social medicine, health-related quality of life, and health care service and management.

For his dissertation, Reza will work to clarify the factors that impact successful aging among residents of Assisted Living Facilities (ALFs). He feels that by providing adjusted services to prevent social disengagement for residents, health-related quality of life of senior adults can be stabilized. Though all factors of successful aging are important, Reza argues that social engagement is perhaps the most pivotal and intermediate factor because while various health problems can result in social dysfunction to some extent for seniors, conversely, every variation in social interaction and connection can also influence individual health status. Therefore, he hypothesizes that that social engagement in many different forms in these settings will lead to successful aging. His results will allow providers, with the tradition of “culture change” in long-term care, to improve the quality of life of seniors in their facilities.

Reza works under the direction of Drs. Stan Ingman, James Swan, & Keith Turner.

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. For more information about how to make a contribution, contact the Sociology Department at 940-565-2296.
Sociology Students Awarded Departmental Scholarships

Each year, the Sociology Department awards monetary scholarships to exemplary graduate students. This year, the recipients were:

**Alvin C. Dorse Scholarship**
Reza Amini
Susan Hughes

**Elizabeth Esterchild Scholarship**
Nichola Driver

**Sociology Scholarship**
Nikolitsa Grigoropoulou
Shanae Jefferies
Myrna Papadouka

**Rudy & Jean Seward Scholarship**
Alexandra Bush

**Hiram Friedsam Scholarship**
Jacquelyn Cheun
Cassie Hudson

**David Malone Scholarship**
Ethan Wells
Dimitrios Zaras
FWOP received the Earth Week Award for Outstanding Student Organization

The Sociology-affiliated student organization Future Without Poverty has been named a sustainability "champion" on UNT campus. The group's mission is to eliminate poverty in a sustainable way by creating opportunities, providing resources, and empowering people. It's members have a passion for creating sustainable communities based on the 4 E's: Education, Enterprise, Environment, and Empowerment. The UNT Office of Sustainability has recognized their dedication and hard work and presented FWOP with the Outstanding Student Organization Award at the Annual Award and Tree Planting Ceremony held on Monday, April 21st.

Doctoral Student Jacque Cheun Elected as VPPO of Graduate Student Council

During the week of April 21-25, the Graduate Student Council held elections for its leadership board. Sociology doctoral student, Jacque Cheun was elected Vice President of Programming and Outreach for the Fall 2014—Spring 2015 school year. In this position, Jacque will be responsible for campus-wide events for graduate students, including Graduate Student Orientation, the Teaching Excellence Seminar, Graduate Exhibition, Graduate Student Appreciation Week, among others. She will also be the graduate student representative on various UNT committees. Jacque says, “I wanted to say thank you to everyone in the department who voted for me...Please voice your concerns or ideas. I want your voices to be heard.” Contact Jacque at Jacque-lyn.Cheun@unt.edu. To learn more about the Graduate Student Council, click here.
During the Fall semester, Sociology Graduate student, Alex Bush along with Sociology Undergraduate student, Ryan Mozingo collaborated with Dr. Michael Thompson to revitalize the UNT Sociology chapter of the international honor society Alpha Kappa Delta (AKD). AKD seeks to acknowledge and promote excellence in the scholarship of sociology and the research of social problems. Similar to AKD, the UNT Sociology Club, is an opportunity for all students to be involved in the department’s academic community, regardless of eligibility for AKD.

This semester, AKD and Sociology Club members hosted a bake sale on UNT campus to raise money for student travel to the SSSA conference. The four recipients of the travel funds include: Nikolitsa Grigoropoulou, Demitrios Zaras, Mary Faye Hanson-Evans, and Alexandra Bush.

Also this semester, AKD inducted three new members, including: Nikolitsa Grigoropoulou, Dimitrios Zaras, and Jacque Cheun. For more information on AKD and the Sociology Club, visit us on Facebook.

**Support the UNT Sociology Department**

While financial contributions are appreciated, this is not the only way you can help. Alumni who give their time to speak to students and serve as mentors are also greatly appreciated. For more information about how to make a contribution, contact the Sociology Department at 940-565-2296.
Alumni Spotlight: Joseph Comeau Appointed Secretary/Treasurer for Southwestern Sociological Association (SSA)

Joseph Comeau completed his Ph.D. in 2012 under the mentorship of his major professor Dr. Cynthia Cready, and dissertation committee members Dr. Gabe Ignatow, Dr. George Yancey, and Dr. Daniel Rodeheaver. As a doctoral student, Joseph became active as a member of the Southwestern Sociological Association (SSA), which he has continued over the past few years. He chaired the session on Sociology of Education at each of the last three annual SSA meetings (2012-2014), and was recently appointed Secretary/Treasurer for SSA. In accepting this office, Joseph steps into a role that, for the past ten years, has been filled by another UNT Sociology alumnus, Dr. Edwin J. Rossman. Joseph's responsibilities will include managing the SSA budget, filing of required tax and licensure documents, assisting with the administration of elections, recording minutes from business meetings, and other duties as needed.

After completing his Ph.D., Joseph remained with the department as a visiting lecturer before accepting a tenure track position with Georgia Southwestern State University in Americus, Georgia. He has been working on research related to Latino familism and college choice, and has recently submitted revisions to Social Forces for a piece called "Race/Ethnicity, Familism, and College Selectivity", along with co-authors Dr. Cready and Dr. Ignatow.

Joseph is currently finishing the first year in his new position and, along with his family, has enjoyed life in Americus, Georgia. Though he is no longer in Texas, Joseph considers himself a part of the UNT Sociology community, and places a great value upon the professional and personal relationships he has with current and past members of the Sociology Department.
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. Thank you!

Make 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.