Chairperson Greeting

As the new academic year gets under way, we are pleased to welcome Dr. Paul Ferguson, the 15th President of Ball State University to campus. A new President brings new opportunities and perspectives to the community and we look forward to being part of the next phase of BSU’s growth and evolution.

We also want to welcome returning students and congratulate our recent graduates. Please share your news with us. We would love to include your updates in our next newsletter!

We would also like to thank everyone who participated in the recent departmental self-study. Your input was greatly valued and appreciated. The feedback from the external reviewers was quite positive and we look forward to building on our strengths and implementing some new initiatives in the coming months.

As you read through this issue of the departmental newsletter, we hope you will get a sense of how vibrant, active, and engaged our faculty and students are and that you will share in our pride. Learn about our immersive learning and internship experiences, our campus and disciplinary leadership, and our outstanding research publications. We hope to share with you the significance of these contributions to teaching, research, and service not only to the BSU campus, but at the regional and national levels as well. We have had an amazing year and here’s to another fantastic year!

Melinda Messineo,
Chairperson, Sociology

AKD Wins National Recognition

Ball State University’s chapter of Alpha Kappa Delta, the International Sociological Honor Society, was recently recognized with the Emory Bogardus Chapter of the Year award. The recognition honors those chapters that fulfill the general purposes of Alpha Kappa Delta: to acknowledge and promote excellence in scholarship in the study of sociology, the research of social problems, and other social and intellectual activities as will lead to improvement in the human condition. The use of this award is to support chapter development and service activities. Congratulations to our AKD members!
“Elemental” Goes to the White House

Dr. Mellisa Holtzman and Dr. Chad Menning, co-directors of “Elemental: A Sexual Assault Protection Program”, were invited to attend an event hosted by the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, at the White House. At the event held on April 29th, the Task Force presented preliminary findings to attendees and highlighted campus efforts.

“Elemental” originated as a Virginia Ball Center for Creative Inquiry Immersive Learning Seminar. Continued development of the project was made possible through the generous support of the Office of Student Affairs, Freshman Connections, the College of Science and Humanities, the Department of Sociology, and Vizi Courseware.

For additional information about the Task Force go to: http://goo.gl/WnISbe

Students Present Research at North Central Sociological Association

Each year the Department of Sociology sponsors a team of Graduate and Undergraduate students to attend the North Central Sociological Association Annual Meeting. This year the meeting was held in Cincinnati, Ohio, and five of the ten students were involved presenting research or on panels.

The student’s original research papers included:

“The Impact of Historical Designation on Neighborhood Residents’ Perception of Social Cohesion” by Elaina Johns-Wolfe

“Jewish Identity and American Aliyah” by Zachary Palmer

“We, Our, Us: An ethnographic study of re-socialization and cultural capital in alcoholism recovery” by David Staggs

“The Impact of Historical Designation on Neighborhood Residents’ Perception of Social Cohesion” by Elaina Johns-Wolfe

“Religious Beliefs Among Family Members of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual (LGB) Individuals: Examining their stability over time” by Katie Zeininger

Student panelists included: Zachary Palmer, Elaina Johns-Wolfe, and Jared Sell.

The trip was funded through a grant from the National AKD office. A special thanks to Dr. Peg Shaffer, AKD co-director.

Department Welcomes New Faculty Member

The Department of Sociology is pleased to welcome Hasan Mahmud as a contract faculty member to Ball State University. He is an award winning teacher and scholar joining us from his graduate studies at the University of California at Los Angeles. His areas of specialization include: International Migration and Development, Globalization and Development, Sociological Theory, Qualitative Research Methods, Asian Immigrants, and Identity Politics. He earned a bachelor and masters degree from the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh and a Master’s degree from Sophia University, Tokyo. He is currently studying remittance practices among Bangladeshi Migrants in Los Angeles and Tokyo. He will be teaching Globalization, Theory, Global Leisure and Sport, and Migration.
Faculty Elected to Leadership Roles

Ball State University’s Department of Sociology faculty members serve in a number of elected roles at the regional and national levels. Dr. Rachel Kraus served as Vice-President and Program Chair for the North Central Sociological Association this year. Dr. Jun Xu was elected to serve in the American Sociological Association’s (ASA) Asia and Asian America Section. Dr. Melinda Messineo is serving as an officer for the ASA section on Teaching and Learning. Congratulations on being elected by your peers to these leadership roles and thank you all for your service to the discipline.

[Photos: Dr. Kraus (top) and Dr. Xu (right) serve in disciplinary elected positions.]

Faculty Making an Impact

In addition to serving as a faculty member in Sociology, Dr. Lisa Pellerin continues to serve as Director of the Women and Gender Studies program.

Dr. Ione DeOllos completed her second term as the Statewide Transfer and Articulation Committee for the Indiana Commission for Higher Education.

Dr. Roger Wojtkiewicz continued to serve on the Advisory Council of the Associate Provost for Research & Dean of the Graduate School and was elected to serve on the Dean’s Advisory Committee for 2014-15.

Faculty Research Brings National Recognitions

Numerous faculty publications bring national recognition to BSU. Dr. Richard Petts’ research on religion and family. His work appears in the Journal of Marriage and Family and the American Sociological Review, two of the most prestigious sociology journals.

The work by Dr. Fang Gong and Dr. Jun Xu in occupational status and prestige was recognized by The Excellence in Research Award from the Center for Disease Control Prevention and Behavioral and Social Science Working group. Dr. Jun Xu’s piece on the experience of Asian Americans written with Jennifer Lee was published in Social Forces, one of the most prestigious sociology journals. Congratulations!

Holtzman Receives NCSA Teaching Award

Dr. Mellisa Holtzman was named the 2014 John H. Schnabel Award Winner at the North Central Sociological Association annual meeting held in Cincinnati, Ohio. The award recognizes distinguished contributions to teaching and service to the region. To be eligible for this recognition, recipients must have significant and sustained leadership in teaching and faculty development at their home campus and NCSA.

Congratulations Dr. Holtzman!
Administrative Coordinator Janet Yadon to Retire

The Department of Sociology would like to thank Janet Yadon for her 27 years of service to Ball State University.

Janet began her career at Ball State University in Freshman Advising. She also worked with the Department of Art and the Department of Mathematical Sciences.

Anyone who has worked in academia knows that it is the Administrative Coordinator who actually makes things happen. We cannot thank Janet enough for her dedication to the sociology family. We all will miss you!

Abundant Immersive Learning Opportunities in Sociology

Our immersive learning experiences continue to connect students to community partners. Our Sociology Capstone students completed phase 5 of our longitudinal study with Henry County Schools. This study provides the Community Foundation and Henry County schools with attitudinal and perception data from students in grades 8-12.

Students also completed a constituent survey and interview project for Shafer Leadership Academy. The findings from this study will be used to inform their strategic planning process that will commence this fall.

Sociology students also completed our third year of partnership with TEAMwork for Quality Living. This goal of the organization is to help highly motivated people navigate their path out of poverty using the power of information, social networks, and social capital. Stay tuned to learn more about this year’s project with the Council on the Environment (COTE).

One internship student wrote of the experience at TEAM Work, “This has been one of the best experiences of my life!”

Want more news? Find us online!
http://cms.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/sociology/