

Kansas State University Sociology Program Newsletter Spring 2022

GREETINGS FROM THE DEPARTMENT HEAD

Dear Esteemed Students and Alumni,

I wanted to write a brief note to introduce myself and discuss some of our many accomplishments over the last couple of years. I assumed the role of Department Head in Fall 2019. In my three years in this position, I have watched our students, faculty, and staff adjust to a changing world on the fly. COVID-19 forced us all to adjust, adapt, and think about the core of our mission to educate students, engage in important research, and service our communities. For our graduating seniors, their last “normal” year of college uninterrupted by COVID-19 was their freshman year. Needless to say, it has been an interesting few years for our program and our K-State family.

Despite the challenges, we have moved forward with many changes as we update our programs to fit market needs and the changing landscape of higher education. We approved a revised Criminology degree through the K-State processes and are awaiting the Kansas Board of Regents for final approval. We are also launching a new Sociology minor next year, and in the process of transitioning to a new website format for SASW and should have it transitioned by Fall 2022.

The Sociology faculty continue to advance social scientific research on many subjects across our program’s many areas of connection. In the last two years the faculty have published dozens of journal articles and book chapters, and several books. Additionally, the program is home to two high quality research journals. Faculty and graduate students have also received several awards in internal and external funding.

We've had several retirements over the past two years. Professor L. Susan (Sue) Williams is retiring in May 2022 after 25 years of exemplary teaching, research, and service to K-state Sociology. Last spring Professor W. Richard Goe retired following 30 years of exemplary research, teaching, and service to our program. No doubt most of our students and alumni over the last three decades will recall at least one class with these long-term educators.

Finally, if you would like to donate to our scholarships and programs please use the following link:
<https://www.k-state.edu/sasw/foundation.html>

Wishing you and yours well,

Don Kurtz, Department Head

Faculty Updates

Chardie Baird: In 2021-2022, I published an article titled “How are You Doing So Well? Persisting as a University Professor” in *A Day is a Struggle*, edited by Rose, Eli and Liz Mason-Deese. With colleagues Ethan Bernick and Brianne Heidbreder, I was awarded the Chapman Center for Rural Studies Interdisciplinary Research Grant. In addition, KAWSE, the Office for which I am Executive Director, offered over 20 professional development events and awards to enrich the lives of girls and women in STEM disciplines.

Alisa Garni: I currently serve as Sociology Graduate Program Director. With generous support from the Adamchak Lecture Series, I developed the First Fridays Graduate Colloquium Series featuring professional development workshops and special guest speakers. I’ve also been conducting fieldwork on the asylum process in U.S. detention centers and refugee camps in Mexico, with related, collaborative publications in progress. Currently, I’m finishing my monograph, *Crafting Dignity: Immigrant Incorporation and Economic Development in Rural America*, as well as additional collaborative work examining how bilingual teens create enclaves to support each other and their families in rural communities.

Gerad Middendorf: Along with colleagues from K-State, Senegal, and Burkina Faso, I published two articles examining the impacts of the Covid pandemic on food systems and livelihoods of smallholder farmers in West Africa. The articles were published in the journals *Agricultural Systems* and *Food and Energy Security*. I also taught a new course at the undergraduate level – *Society, Food, and Agriculture*.

Travis Linnemann: Over the last year I completed two book projects, a monograph *The Horror of Police*, soon published by University of Minnesota Press and with colleagues in the UK a co-edited collection *Ghost Criminology: the afterlives of crime and punishment*, published by New York University Press.

Lisa Melander: I expanded my research areas into community corrections with two new projects. One included a co-authored publication with two graduate students and another collaborator on the gendered effects of Kansas' sanctions probation model. The other is a new grant-funded project on equity and inclusion in drug court admissions for the 28th Judicial District Community Corrections.

Matthew Sanderson: How the world has changed since 2019! I assumed the role of Editor-in-Chief at *Agriculture and Human Values*, a leading international journal that advances interdisciplinary research on the relations linking people, agriculture, and ecosystems. I received funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, The Nature Conservancy, the National Science Foundation, and the Australian Research Council to continue to my work on water, food, and agriculture, focusing especially on the High Plains region in the U.S. I was pleased to be awarded the Excellence in Scholarship Award from the Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society, the Best Article Award at the World Congress of Sociology, the Leslie Hewes Award for best social science article in Great Plains Research, and the Karen Ann Griffith Research Award from the College of Arts and Sciences at KSU.

L. Frank Weyher: I’m continuing my research on culture and emotions in social life and social theory. Together with Dr. Iveta Ķešāne (Latvian Academy of Culture), I recently published “(Self-)Confidence, Migration, and the State: A Study of Emigration from Latvia” in the journal *Social Currents* (2020). I also served for one year as Sociology Program Coordinator and Graduate Director. For the Graduate Program, I regularly teach Classical Theory, Intermediate Research Methods, and Sociology of Culture. For the Undergraduate Program, I teach Urban Sociology, Sociology of Culture, and Sociology of Emotions.

MAAs and PhDs Awarded

MA Theses

2021

Alina Sadykova -- "The role of women facilitators of bride kidnapping in Kyrgystan" <https://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/handle/2097/41348>

Brandy Webb -- "A qualitative exploration of nonconsensual pornography sharing experiences and influences among adult males" <https://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/handle/2097/41751>

2020

Karly D. Eden -- "No ifs, no buts, no education cuts": analyzing teacher experiences and participation in the 2018 Oklahoma teachers' strike" <https://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/handle/2097/40804>

PhD Dissertations

2021

George Browne -- "A multilevel assessment of sentencing disparity in Kansas: Do sentencing disparities differ by individuals and judicial districts?" <https://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/handle/2097/41539>

Stanley Veitch -- "Uneven geographic development of beer breweries in the United States" <https://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/handle/2097/41471>

2020

Alayna Colburn -- "A qualitative inquiry into the dynamics of family reintegration following a deployment" <https://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/handle/2097/40904>

Michael J. Miller -- "The stories we tell about food: Understanding narratives of food environments and coping with loss of food access" <https://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/handle/2097/40970>

Rebekah Carnes -- "Water conservation decision-making by producers on the Ogallala Aquifer" <https://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/handle/2097/40350>

Donya Karimi -- "Development, religiosity, and women's formal employment in the MENA region: An exploratory study" <https://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/handle/2097/40371>

Stephen Lauer -- "The weight of water: Values, civic engagement, and collaborative groundwater management on the U.S. high plains" <https://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/handle/2097/40373>

Jan E. Todd -- "New religious immigrants in the Great Plains: a study of most white congregations receiving foreign-born pastors" <https://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/handle/2097/40788>

Student Awards

Graduate Student Awards Received

Alina Sadykova won the department's annual Graduate Student Research Award in 2021.

Christopher Brewer won the department's annual Graduate Student Research Award in 2022.

Trina Knight won the department's annual Graduate Student Teaching Award in 2021 and 2022. Knight also won the Graduate Student Council's Teaching Excellence Award in 2021.

Abigaile Weiser won an award for research presented at the K-State Graduate Research, Arts, and Discovery (K-GRAD) Forum on March 31st, 2022.

A Closer Look...

Learn more about our 2022 Graduate Student Research & Teaching Award recipients



Christopher Brewer is a 5th year doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work at Kansas State University. Over the past three years, Christopher has been working closely with his major professor, Dr. Kevin Steinmetz, on a National Science Foundation grant interviewing cybercrime personnel regarding their work from multiple police departments in the United States. He is currently working on his dissertation, which explores the perceptions of perpetrators and victims of child exploitation from Internet Crimes Against Children investigators. His other research interests include technocrime, cyberdeviance, hacker/hacktivist cultures, and policing. Christopher recently published a solo-authored paper in the *Policing and Society* journal regarding online police culture with additional articles under review. Beginning Fall 2022, he will be an Assistant Professor for the Department of Criminal Justice Sciences at Illinois State University continuing his research and teaching classes in cybercrime and research methods.



Trina Knight is a 3rd year doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work at Kansas State University. She has had the pleasure of being an instructor of record for several sociology and criminology courses across seven semesters. In addition to teaching, Trina's research interests lie broadly within the intersections of crime, religion, conspiracy, and technology. She has conducted research regarding religious expression in everyday life, cybersecurity, and cyberharassment. Her work has been published in *Victims and Offenders* with additional works in progress. Presently, Trina is preparing to begin her dissertation research exploring the influence of participation in conspiracy-based communities on intimate relationships and attitudes towards criminal behavior.

Student Awards (cont.)

Undergraduate Student Awards Received 2021-2022

The Dakin Memorial Scholarship: Jessica Jack and Mercedes Trevino

The Dakin Memorial Scholarship is given to an undergraduate student currently enrolled in the Sociology Program, recognizing outstanding non-traditional students for the 2021-2022 academic year.



Jessica Jack is a junior at Kansas State University pursuing a degree in Sociology with a minor in Criminology as well as double majoring in Political Science. Prior to transferring to Kansas State, Jessica served in the United States Marine Corps for 9 ½ years until she was medically retired in 2020. Jessica plans to graduate in spring 2023 and her plans after graduation are currently undecided, though she has always wanted to become a Law Enforcement Officer.



Mercedes Trevino is from the Pueblo of Acoma in New Mexico. She's a mom of six children, ages ranging from 21 to 5 years old, with the youngest on the Autism spectrum. An Army veteran with one combat tour to Iraq, she is currently pursuing a bachelors in Sociology with emphasis in Criminology. She is part of the Tri-Alpha Honor Society, National Society of Leadership and Success, and the Native American Student Body program. After graduation, she plans on applying to law school and hopes to practice Native American Law.

The Regnier Scholarship: Madaline Foster

The Regnier Scholarship is for juniors and seniors currently enrolled in the Sociology Program, recognizing one student that demonstrates a commitment to the study of sociology. While the scholarship is merit-based, the Regnier Scholarship does give preference to students with financial need.



Madaline Foster is a senior in the Sociology Program in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work at Kansas State University. Specifically, she is getting a B.S. in Criminology with a minor in Communication Studies. She hopes of pursuing a career field in Juvenile Rehabilitation.

Student Awards (cont.)

The Long Memorial Scholarship: Ries Laster

The Long Memorial is for sophomores, juniors, and seniors currently enrolled in the Sociology Program, recognizing an exceptional student for the 2021-2022 academic year.



Ries Laster is from Shawnee, KS, and is majoring in Criminology and Business Management, Pre-Law with a minor in Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies. She is currently the Vice President of Pre-Law Ambassadors and the Apparel Chairman for her sorority, Zeta Tau Alpha. Additionally, Ries is a student worker for the Pre-Law Office of Advising at Kansas State University. After K-State, Ries plans to attend law school. Currently, she hopes to specialize in family law to become an adoption attorney someday.

The Hill Memorial Award: Darwin Brown

The Hill Memorial Award is for juniors and seniors currently enrolled in the Sociology Program who show outstanding academic achievement, while also recognizing students with graduate school potential. Ultimately, the award aims to encourage promising undergraduate students in the Sociology program to pursue graduate work in sociology or a related field.



Darwin Brown is a third-year student majoring in both Sociology and French. She is the Secretary of the Criminology Club, and enjoys sewing and making rugs in her spare time. After graduation, she plans to either apply to law school or work in the nonprofit sector.

Faculty Retirements



Dr. L. Sue Williams

Dr. L. Sue Williams came to K-State in 1997, recruited to support and expand the criminology specialization area in Sociology. After earning her PhD from the University of Connecticut, Dr. Williams brought a wealth of experience in both qualitative and quantitative research as well as teaching experience. Her dissertation marked a scholarly milestone in documenting how place-level characteristics affect individual life decisions of young women. Since, Dr. Williams has taught more than 25 courses to over 15,000 students, producing upwards of 50,000 credit hours of instruction. She has accrued a long list of awards, including national and international recognition for her accomplishments in teaching, research, and service.

Dr. Sue — as she came to be known — has left a distinguishing mark as an innovative distance educator with Global Campus. In fact, the moniker “Dr. Sue” came about as she sought a more personal connection with online students. And it has stuck. Thousands of K-State students from around the globe often call advisors and simply ask what Dr. Sue is offering for the current semester. While she offers several required courses, it is the unique courses she designs herself that leave lasting impressions, led by the Study of Serial Murder, in which students hear from veteran investigators, crime scene analysis, and a young survivor. As an advocate of strong sociological perspectives, Dr. Sue reports that “often, students claim they learn more about themselves than the killers we study.” Other popular offerings of Dr. Sue include Anatomy of Mass Murder, Sex Crimes & Society, Women & Crime, Constructing the Criminal Mind, and Crime, Media & Culture. Dr. Sue is also known for incorporating numerous field experts and scholars as guest presenters. Most recently, she introduced a new course, Death, Life & the Law, in which 10 nationally known experts shared their knowledge and experience.

Throughout her career, Dr. Sue has continued an active research agenda, accumulating around \$2 million in external funding. During the last decade, she has directed several projects in ethnographic-like research throughout Kansas prisons, resulting in numerous publications and theses, including two award-winning dissertations. In recent years, she led a large research team in investigating the effect of rural communities on juvenile delinquency processes, identifying junctures of intervention to reduce system involvement for youth. The project, commonly known as Our Town Our Kids, produced a 300+ page toolkit for community collaboration concerning juvenile justice. The website, outtowourkids.org, illustrates much of their work.

While much evidentiary support documents her work, Dr. Sue reports that the greatest reward lies in lasting relationships with her former students. It is not unusual for former students to write or call years after they graduate, reconnecting, reporting recent ventures, or reminiscing about times past. As one small example, she recalls the “three Josh’s” from her first semester at K-State in 1997: Josh Tate, Josh Burnett, and Josh Hendricks, three students who shared responsibilities in the Criminology Club sponsored by Dr. Sue. Twenty-five years later, she still hears from all of them (and many others) regularly. She has mentored more than a dozen students through their master’s program and chaired six PhD candidates to successful careers: Dr. Don L. Kurtz, Kansas State University; Dr. Travis Linnemann, Kansas State University; Dr. Ryan Alexander, Allen Community College; Dr. Tamara Lynn, Fort Hays State University; Dr. Edward L.W. Green, Roosevelt University, Chicago; and Dr. April N. Terry, Fort Hays State University. As Dr. Sue reports, “All of my students represent the real legacy of a teacher, and it is truly my honor to have them share it with me.”

Dr. Sue retires on May 14, 2022.