

The Social Connection: Sociology at Ashford University

Welcome From the Sociology Program Chair

Welcome students and faculty to the first newsletter of 2014! We have lots of news for you: program highlights, spotlights on our amazing Associate faculty members and a stellar student too! The full-time Sociology faculty are busy at the moment planning out activities for 2014 to support students, faculty, and the program.

The most challenging opportunity this year is the program review of the BA in Sociology, which you will hear more about in the newsletter. But as you can see, your program chair has her crash helmet on and a 'Bring It' attitude to tackle whatever comes our way in 2014!

Sociology on CETL

The new Sociology page on the CETL (Center for Teaching and Learning) in the Quad is now available as a resource to all associate and full-time faculty. This site can be referred to regularly for updated information,

As a last note, by our next newsletter Ms. Efua Akoma, one of the full-time faculty in Sociology will have achieved her goal of a Ph.D. Let's all send her our best wishes as she tackles her final hurdle!

Best of luck to all of you this year... let's make it a great one!

The Sociology Program Full-time Faculty are:

Dr. Elaine Alden, Program Chair
Ms. Efua Akoma, Assistant Professor
Dr. Nichole Boutte-Heiniluoma, Assistant Professor
Dr. Layana Navarre-Jackson, Assistant Professor
Dr. C.T. Rowley, Assistant Professor

networking opportunities, program feedback and general teaching and sociology questions. Full-time faculty can access it through the Quad; Associate faculty have a unique entry link, user id, and password which would



Dr. A and her crash helmet...



Dr. A and her go-kart...

Volume 2, Issue 1
Winter 2014

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Sociology Program News



At least every 5 years, the degree programs at Ashford University are reviewed to ensure they are current and relevant in their discipline and serve the needs of our students. Program review is a 17-month process, which includes information gathering, analysis, and a report of recommendations to enhance the degree and specializations, which are then internally and externally reviewed and then approved through Faculty Governance prior to implementation.

In 2014 the sociology program and specializations will be reviewed and we welcome your support and input as students and faculty.

Please watch for requests for feedback in the Ashford University Sociology Club on LinkedIn (for students, faculty and alumni), the CETL Sociology page (for faculty), and your e-mail inbox (for more private sharing) in January through March for opportunities to be involved in this important process.

In The Know: Sociology In Action

Sociology of the Body and Embodiment

“Sociology of the body and embodiment seeks to encourage and enhance theory, research, teaching, and other professional aspects in the study of sociology and body/embodiment. It seeks to promote communication, collaboration, and consultation among scholars in the interdisciplinary study of the body

“The body social is many things: the prime symbol of self, but also of the society” -Anthony Synnott

and embodiment...The aim of this [aspect] is to support and encourage sociological scholarship on a wide range of embodied dynamics includ-

ing human and non-human bodies, morphology, human reproduction, anatomy, body fluids, biotechnology, genetics; but also theories of embodiment, virtual bodies, productivity of bodies, changing bodies, life course and the body, body and spirit/soul, unequal bodies, micro and macro sociological analysis of the political, and social and individual bodies.”
–Excerpt from (ASA 2013)

Associate Faculty Spotlight: Jeremy Baker

Mr. Jeremy Baker is a new stellar associate faculty member at Ashford University. He began teaching for Ashford in June of 2013. Mr. Baker lives in Columbus, Ohio with his wife, Stephanie, and daughter, Madilyn. When he is not teaching sociology, he is a stay-at-home dad. He received his BA in 2005 from Westminster College and his MA in Sociology in 2007 from the Ohio State University.

Reaching a broad range of students is Mr. Baker's favorite part of teaching at Ashford. He really loves being able to engage soldiers serving in Afghanistan, artists drinking coffee in New York, and stay-at-home moms in rural Texas all in the same conversation. He sees utilizing the sociological perspective as key to engaging students in the classroom. To properly explain a complex social issue to a student, one must understand where the student is coming from. If he has a secret, that is it.



Sociology Opportunities in the Real World

Sociology is a great major for those seeking to make a difference in one's community, society or world. Sociology majors have a unique analytical lens and research skills that can make them an asset to a variety of organizations. If you look, you will find that Soc. majors are working in both the private and public sector. But, where should graduating seniors seeking to make a difference with their degree look for work?

One great place is www.idealists.org. Idealist.org is a career-networking site where job seekers may post a resume and look for career opportu-

nities. These include jobs, local volunteering opportunities, global volunteering opportunities, and internships.

Idealist.org is different from other sites because it focuses on providing opportunities to work with non-profit organizations that are seeking to make a difference in society. As of December 2013, they listed over 8,000 jobs, 13,000 volunteer opportunities and over 6,000 internships in support of this mission. On this site, one can search for opportunities based on job functions such as, counseling, education, advocacy or re-

search. One can also look for positions that have been posted specifically by non-profits, government agencies, and more. If you are graduating soon and looking for opportunities consider checking them out!



Student Success Corner: Looking Forward

Building your resume so you can stand out from others is vital in today's economy. Often times new graduates have the educational requirements employers are looking for but fall short with work experience.

One way to remedy this is volunteer work. Many volunteering opportunities can be used to illustrate your leadership capacity and that is a valuable skill every employer deems important. You also may be learning valuable skill

sets that can translate nicely into the workforce.

Joining a professional organization related to your field is another way to add to your experience. Being a part of an organization will certainly show a potential employer you are going the extra mile to ensure you are networking with people in your field who are engaging in the newest and most relevant research impacting your field.

Another way of demonstrating organizing and leadership skills is by getting involved in your school clubs. It is a fantastic way to find out about opportunities related to the areas you may be seeking employment in as well as networking with other students and faculty.

These three initiatives are not the only way to stand out from the crowd, but they are good examples from which to start.

Associate Faculty Spotlight: Michelle Craig

Ms. Michelle Craig is a stellar Associate Faculty Member at Ashford University. She has a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Arizona, and her Master's degree in International Law.

Ms. Craig recently began teaching SOC315, *Cross-Cultural Perspectives*. When asked what she thinks makes her a successful instructor, she says, "It's my passion to learn about as many cul-

tures as I can and I try to stay on top of current events.

She loves multimedia resources and says, "I try to bring interactive media, videos and topical books into my guidance and announcements wherever it



applies. I also love adding photographs from my travels to the classroom".

Ms. Craig also says that while these resources can make a classroom more engaging, "In the end, I think it's most important to strive to be supportive while setting high expectations. I find that my end-of-course-surveys tend to be the most positive for those classes where I've set the bar high and students have risen to the challenge."

Update: The Sociology Club on LinkedIn

Thanks to you all, our club has grown exponentially! In an effort to facilitate student success, we have offered a number of opportunities throughout the latter part of 2013 that were a big success.

We were able to provide lots of resources such as five publishing opportunities, information on over four academic organizations that have annual conferences, four specific volunteering opportunities and a resource for volunteering wherever you are.



There were over four resources on job seeking assistance and information and tips for student success on time management and resume

development. As a result, we have a student seeking a publication and others looking at attending conferences and presenting papers!

We have been having fantastic conversations about a variety of interesting topics as well. If you have not joined the club yet, don't wait too long. Otherwise, you may miss out on the great plans and discussions we have in store for 2014!

Sociology Club: Call For President

We are looking for a dynamic person to be the **President of our Sociology Club!**

We would love for you to be nominated so check out the instructions on how to do that.

All nominees need to submit a post to the sociology club on LinkedIn titled - ***Pick me for your club President!***

The post must address the following questions:

1. Why do you love Sociology?
2. How can Sociology positively impact the world?
3. What will you bring to the club?

Add anything else you think we need to know to make you our #1 choice!

Maintain professionalism but do not limit yourself on creativity!

The deadline for the submission is **March 1, 2014.**

Once submitted, club members can click on ***like*** for the individual they think will make a phenomenal president. These ***likes*** will generate a top three candidate pool. The club president will be chosen from this group.

Student Spotlight: In His Own Words Sociology major — Kris Kuboyama

When I first started taking classes at Ashford University, I really did not know what academic integrity was and I also did not know how to use the computer well. I needed help from my teenage daughter on how to use certain programs. Being a teenager, she would say, "Here, let me do it. I can do it faster." I explained to her that she needed to be patient and teach me how to do it on my own. Through many hard times

and frustrating moments for my daughter, I finally learned how to do things on my own. I learned how to submit a paper, to do a power point and many other wonderful things.

I could have chosen to take the easy way out, but knew that if I had let someone else do my work for me, I would be no better off than I was now.

I feel that technology has opened new doors for me in that I can use it to not only find information, but to learn about a certain culture or find words that can help me as a teacher to communicate with parents. I hope I can use all that I have learned to encourage others that it is never too late to gain knowledge.

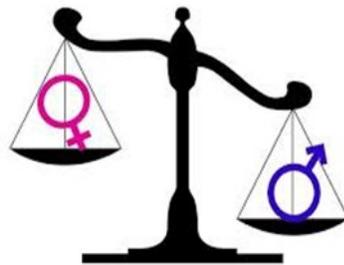
- Piece by Kris Kuboyama

Global Focus: Gender Inequality

Every year, the World Economic Forum (WEF) produces a table of countries based on their gender gap. Accordingly, countries are listed by the extent to which they have reduced inequality between women and men and is made up of four equally weighted sub-indices: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment, and health and survival.

The overall position of countries is interesting, and yet the calculations are somewhat problematic; a country could do very poorly in two measures and very well in 2 measures and end up in the middle of the ranking. For example: The United States is ranked at 23. It ranked high for economic participation (6) and opportunity and educational attainment (1), but much

lower for political empowerment (60) and health and survival (33).



The following are the top 10 and bottom 10 according to the latest (2013) report:

<i>Top 10</i>	<i>Bottom 10</i>
<i>Iceland</i>	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>
<i>Finland</i>	<i>Mali</i>
<i>Norway</i>	<i>Morocco</i>
<i>Sweden</i>	<i>Iran</i>
<i>Philippines</i>	<i>Cote d'Ivoire</i>
<i>Ireland</i>	<i>Mauritania</i>
<i>New Zealand</i>	<i>Syria</i>
<i>Denmark</i>	<i>Chad</i>
<i>Switzerland</i>	<i>Pakistan</i>
<i>Nicaragua</i>	<i>Yemen</i>

- Piece contributed by Dr. Elaine Alden

[Source: World Economic Forum (2013)]

Sociology on the Internet

In this day and age it is easy to find almost any sort of information we want on the internet. While sites such as Facebook, Reddit and CNN are easily seen by millions of visitors a day, it is sometimes hard to see the thousands of other interesting sites that are out there. As sociologists, it is important for you to have sites to have in your internet arsenal. While not comprehensive, the following are a few good sites to keep bookmarked:

Everyday Sociology
www.everydaysociologyblog.com

Racism Review: Scholarship and Activism Toward Racial Justice
www.racismreview.com

The Socjournal: A New Media Journal of Sociology and Society
www.sociology.org

The Global Sociology Blog
globalsociology.com



Associate Faculty Spotlight: Michael Emmart



Mr. Michael Emmart has been an Associate Faculty Member for the College of Liberal Arts at Ashford University since 2011. He holds a Master of Science in Youth Development from Kansas State University and a Master of Arts in Religion from Liberty University.

Mr. Emmart spent nearly 15 years working as a counselor for at-risk youth within New York's Office of Children and Family Services; initially catching the "teaching bug" when presented an opportunity to collaborate with the State's train-

ing bureau. He often credits this foundation with his effort to bring "real life" into his classrooms, noting that adult students especially are looking for these all important connections between the theoretical and the practical. Mr. Emmart thinks the ability to connect with professional experiences – the instructor's and the students' – is the key advantage of online learning environments. He truly enjoys the chance to see the Ashford classroom become just as important to the students' professional development as it is to their academic transcript. The students seem to enjoy this as well!

Ashford University is a vibrant community that offers effective learning online. Whether you pursue your education on line or in the traditional college experience, you'll find both infused with the same history of academic excellence.



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