Save the Date!
Upcoming Events in Sociology

- Thursday, March 24 (11:30 a.m.), Glatfelter 001 – Pizza lunch and program for majors, minors, and prospective majors and minors
- March 28 to March 31 – Pre-preregistration for declared Sociology majors
- Thursday, April 14 (11:30 a.m.) – Lunchtime film and discussion sponsored by The Sociological Experience
- Saturday, April 16 – Get Acquainted Day, includes Sociology department presentations for prospective students and their families
- Wednesday, May 4 (4 p.m.), Bullet Hole Patio – Sociology Department End of Year Party

Coming Soon to an E-Mailbox Near You: Pre-preregistration

Each spring, sociology majors have an opportunity to reserve space for themselves in Sociology courses for the following year before general pre-registration. This process is known as pre-preregistration. Declared majors will receive pre-preregistration forms by email on Thursday, March 24. Paper copies will also be available in the department area and at the March 24 department lunch. Majors will need to turn in their forms (hard copy) by March 31.

The Sociological Experience

The student club, The Sociological Experience, is planning a number of treats for sociology students. The group is hard at work creating T-shirts to celebrate the sociology major. They are also planning a film and discussion on Thursday, April 14.

Featured Alumnus: Stephen Hutton

Steve Hutton graduated from Gettysburg College in 1995 with a major in sociology and now works as a high school guidance counselor. Steve holds a position with the Lincoln Intermediate Unit, which provides educational services for both public and private schools. His current assignment is at Delone Catholic High School in McSherrystown, Pennsylvania, where he provides both individual counseling for students and help with the college application process.

After graduating from Gettysburg College, Steve prepared for his chosen career by completing a three-year graduate program that provided him with both a Master’s degree in Guidance and Counseling and accreditation as a school guidance counselor. How did his sociology major prepare him for this work? Steve feels that the major, especially the emphasis on research and writing, prepared him very well for the rigors of graduate school. Even more important, however, was an internship he did for course credit as part of his sociology major. Steve’s internship was with Adams County Children and Youth Services, where he spent a lot of his time working with school guidance counselors. By the end of that summer, he said, “I had found my career.”
Featured Research
The Worth of Minimum Wage

For some time, Professor Craig Lair has had an interest in minimum wage policy and its implications for social inequality. He explained the issue this way: “It is widely known that the value of the United States minimum wage has not kept pace with inflation since it was enacted. This means that someone working at a minimum wage level would have to work more in order to maintain the total purchasing power of their income.” Professor Lair calculated the number of hours someone working at minimum wage would have to work to achieve certain income thresholds, and how this changed over time. He was shocked to discover that workers earning minimum wage in 2007 must work 9 additional hours per week to attain the poverty level income for a family of three compared to minimum wage workers in 1959. Professor Lair noted that “This is a significant difference not only in that a person now has to work more than a standard (8 hour) workday in order to achieve the same income level, but over the course of a year this translates into an additional 468 hours of work.” That’s an additional three months of standard work weeks!

These results led Professor Lair to wonder if the United States is unusual in this regard. Enter sophomore sociology major Katie Ragon. Katie was a student in Professor Lair’s Globalization course last spring. Knowing that this topic might interest her, he approached her to ask if she would like to work with him on further research. This summer, with support from a Mellon Grant, Katie will be working on a research project to do a comparative analysis of minimum wage data from European Union countries. We are all looking forward to hearing more about the results of this research.

Congratulations Are in Order

In the past several months, many members of our Sociology department community have been honored for their accomplishments.

- Professor Emelio Betances received the 2010 National Book Award from the Ministry of Culture in the Dominican Republic in recognition of his book La Iglesia catolica y la politica del poder en America Latina: el caso dominicano en perspectiva comparada (Santo Domingo: Funglode, 2009 -- published in English as The Catholic Church and Power Politics in Latin America: The Dominican Case in Comparative Perspectives by Rowman and Littlefield in 2007).
- At Spring Honors Day last May, Professor Voon Chin Phua was awarded Gettysburg College’s Thompson Distinguished Teaching Award in recognition of his exceptional teaching talent and dedication.
- At Fall Honors Day in October, senior major Lauren Fox received the Harry C. and Catherine Noffsinger Hartzell Award in recognition of her outstanding academic performance in sociology during the junior year.
- In November, a number of junior and senior students were inducted into Alpha Kappa Delta, the national sociology honor society. The new AKD members are: Caitlin Bay, Emily Bowden, Mara Dold, Katharine Garvey-Hall, Caroline Maggard, Allison Siana, Laura Sprinkle, Martha Tansler, Hannah Tenenbaum, and Alice Wolfkill.
- Sophomore sociology majors Joe Miller and Katie Ragon have both been awarded Mellon grants for summer research. Joe will be working with Professor Phua on a “Comparative Analysis of Educational Standardization in the United States and Singapore;” and Katie will be working with Professor Lair to study “International Minimum Wage Levels and Working Time.”

New Faculty Search

You may have noticed several announcements recently for guest presentations by candidates for a full-time faculty position in the Department of Sociology. We expect a new faculty member to join the department in the fall. Elected representatives Lauren Fox (senior) and Jenna Christy (junior) have been participating in the evaluation of candidates and providing a voice for students in the search.