

Greetings from the Head of Sociology: Donna Barnes



The past year has been very busy. The department hosted a Distinguished Speaker, Dr. Christopher Chase-Dunn. It also launched a national search for a new tenure-track faculty member. I am extremely pleased to announce that we succeeded in hiring our top candidate, Professor Matthew Painter. This newsletter includes additional details on both the Distinguished Speaker program and Professor Painter.

The department also excelled this year in terms of the accomplishments of its students. Two of our majors kept in contact with the department in regard to their international experiences, and their adventures are highlighted in this newsletter. Also, a number of our majors excelled academically and in terms of volunteerism, which was reflected in awards and honors bestowed upon them. These students are recognized in the Student News section of this newsletter.

In the spring, the department hosted a Graduation and Honors banquet. About 40 students, faculty, and guests were in attendance. Many of our graduating seniors attended, and the occasion to bid farewell to them, as well as to recognize the awards and honors that they had garnered, was appreciated by all.

I also have sad news to share. We experienced the loss of one of our colleagues this year. On the evening of December 25th, Associate Professor Margie Zamudio passed away in a tragic accident. Her memorial service was touching, with a number of faculty and students speaking of the impact that she had on their lives. Clips from the memorial service are posted on the department's website (www.uwyo.edu/sociology).

I want to thank the faculty, staff, and students for their special contributions this year, as well as our many alumni and friends who have supported the department this year through financial contributions and kind words shared via letters or email. Currently, we are making a big push in regard to the Meeks Fund. We are \$12,000 short of the funding level required for receiving a state match of \$50,000. The clock is ticking: We have less than two years left to secure the state match. It is an exciting and unprecedented opportunity. We hope that you will give serious thought to supporting the Meeks Fund as part of your tax-deductible charitable donations this year. More information on this fund is provided in the newsletter.

Best regards,
Donna Barnes

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Special Faculty News



Professor Matthew Painter joined our faculty this fall. We are delighted to have him as the newest addition to our department. He earned his PhD in sociology this past summer from the Ohio State University. He is already an impressive scholar, with four articles recently published: "Get a Job and Keep It!: High School Employment and Adult Wealth Accumulation," *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*; "Growth in Women's Political Representation: A Longitudinal Exploration of Democracy, Electoral System, and Gender Quotas," *European Journal of Political Research* and "Year of the Woman, Decade of the Man: Trajectories of Growth in Women's Statehouse Representation," *Social Science Research* (both with Paxton and Hughes); and "The Role of Setting in Elite Influence Allocation," *Sociological Analysis*.

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Student News

Bethany Kopsa spent the Spring 2010 semester in a Study Abroad program in Costa Rica. Here is her personal description of the experience:



At the top of my *Bienvenidos Estudiantes* pamphlet were two quotes. The first read “The world is a book and those who do not travel read only the first page” (Mark Twain). The second was a Moorish proverb: “He who does not travel does not know the value of men.” Looking back on my last four months here in Puntarenas, Costa Rica, I have come to appreciate these quotes.

Last year I decided to spend my final semester in college advancing my language skills by finishing my Spanish minor in an intensive language study program. With the help of my UW advisor, I arrived in my new home on January 8th in a small coastal town on the northern side of Costa Rica. I was assigned a host family to aid in my Spanish emersion and began an experience of a lifetime.

Over the next four months my tempo of life became a slow crawl as I learned more about the Spanish language, culture, beliefs, and other aspects of the Costa Rican Ticos. I have spent some time traveling around the world, but having the opportunity to take part and live the life of people very different from my own, even for this short amount of time, has been priceless. Some of my most memorable moments have been digging for *pianguas* (clams) up to my knees in mud in the mangrove forest reserve of Chira Island (see photo above), cheering for the local Puntarenas Sharks at their soccer games, learning the Tico way of using public transportation, pushing through lines at both the border of Nicaragua and Panama, identifying marine fish in Manuel Antonio Park for my Biology class, helping my host family make 125 hamburguesas for soccer games on weekends at their soda (small restaurant), and practicing small talk with the regulars who fondly called me la bonita gringa.

Through my adventures, I have gained an appreciation for the value of participating in something outside of your comfort zone. I will forever encourage students of all disciplines to take advantage of the Study Abroad programs at UW, which provide a college experience found nowhere else in the States. It was a uniquely educating experience for which I will forever be grateful.

Sean Moran, who is double-majoring in psychology and sociology, participated in the Shanghai Service Exchange this past summer. Here is his brief description of the experience:



Participating in the exchange program was an incredible, eye-opening experience to how different and in many ways similar cultures can be to one another. My first reaction to Shanghai was astonishment at the number of people and incredible amount of structures located throughout this gigantic city. Throughout the trip, I learned about Shanghai and its modernization, as well as about Shanghai Normal University. Also, I learned about cultural aspects of China including calligraphy, Chinese knots, and traditional tea ceremonies. Another incredible part to this trip was the opportunity to visit the World Expo held in Shanghai, which was a monumental experience when learning about other societies and what their goals were for the development of communities around the world.

This exchange experience also provided me with the chance to interact with students in another country. During the trip, friendships and connections were made with other students across the world. In the end, this trip was possibly the greatest experience I have ever had and proved to be a mind-opening experience to just how diverse cultures can be, and yet how societies with these diverse cultures can still cooperate with one another to find a wide array of solutions to global issues and create strong social bonds.

Student Awards



Ashley Wing, one of our graduating seniors, was selected as a **Top 20 Award** recipient in the College of Arts and Sciences at UW. Each of the thirty A & S departments can nominate students for the award. It is a remarkable achievement to be nominated for this prestigious award, and it is an even greater accomplishment to be selected. We wish Ashley the best as she begins her post-graduate training—no, not in Sociology, but at UW's law school.



The department awarded the **Flittie Scholarship** for academic excellence to three undergraduate majors this year: **Shawn Davis, Amy Rieser, and Megan Snowberger**. The selection process for the scholarship is very competitive. Winners are selected from a pool of majors who have completed their junior year and have a minimum 3.5 grade point average in their sociology courses. Congratulations to each of the Flittie scholars!



Carly (Levick) Bradley received the **Arts and Sciences Board of Visitors Service Award**. She was the Supplemental Instruction (SI) instructor for SOC 1000. SI instructors are undergraduates who are hand-picked by professors. They have to be academically accomplished, but it is equally important that they exhibit characteristics that make them well-suited to mentor students who are struggling academically. Professor Machalek nominated Carly for the service award, saying that she excelled as an SI instructor and that she devoted countless hours to preparing SI materials for students.



Claire Fairley was this year's recipient of the **Chet Meeks Summer Research Award**. The Meeks Memorial Fund was established in honor of Chet Meeks, one of our former undergraduate majors who later completed a PhD in sociology. He was an Assistant Professor at Georgia State University at the time of his death from cancer in January 2008. The scholarship is competitively awarded to one of our graduate students for the purpose of conducting research in the summer. Claire's research project involves assessing the utility of a theoretical model (an extension of Value-Belief-Norm theory) for predicting "environmentally significant behavior." She plans to use data from the 2000 General Social Survey, a national survey of over 2800 households that contained a module of questions regarding the environment.



Alpha Kappa Delta is the international honorary society for sociology. The AKD chapter at UW recognized its new inductees at the Graduation and Honors Award Banquet held in mid-April. This year sixteen sociology majors were inducted. Eleven students, including some past inductees, qualified for AKD Honor cords that are worn during the university's commencement ceremony.

Undergraduate Research



L-R: Orlando Arnold, Megan Snowberger, Kyle Wollman

Title of research paper:
 “Effects of Political Views and Religious Service Attendance on Concern for Global Warming”



L-R: Carly Levick, Melissa Robinson, Barry Hendricks, Martha Tate

Title of research paper:
 “Social Factors Influencing Depression: Effects of Marital Status and Income”



L-R: Andrea Franco, Bradley Moss (not pictured: Shawn Davis)

Title of research paper:
 “Religious Participation: Employment Status and Income Effects”

Each of the above research papers was the result of team work in SOC 4090, our required sociological research course that was taught by Professor Malcolm Holmes. Each team of students chose a topic, did background research, and developed hypotheses. Then using the General Social Survey national-level data set, they analyzed relevant data using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Sean Moran participated in the poster presentations at Undergraduate Research Day in April. His poster presentation, "Police Interaction with Victims of Domestic Violence," was very interesting. He was really enthusiastic about the opportunity to participate in this major research event for undergraduates.

Graduate Student Research

In addition to graduate student Claire Fairley’s Meeks Summer Research Scholarship Award, the department voted to financially help two other graduate students, Brianna Best and Ryan Gunderson, who undertook research projects in Summer 2010.



Brianna’s research consisted of a case study of prison inmates in Wyoming. More specifically, she interviewed inmates to explore their reasons for choosing incarceration over parole. Recent trends in Wyoming show that 32 percent of inmates are choosing to waive their right to be considered for parole release. It is in the interest of the state to increase parole participation. Incarceration places a strain on taxpayer dollars. Furthermore, parole is an important mechanism for reducing the overcrowded correctional facility populations and is also thought to provide benefits to both the offender and the community. However, in order to increase parole participation, a better understanding of why inmates choose incarceration over parole is needed.



Ryan’s research falls within the relatively new subfield of sociology that explores human-animal relations. His summer research examined how animal commodification has transformed human-animal association. He also probed the social ecological consequences of intensive animal agriculture production. He used a Marxian theoretical lens and also drew upon early critical theory, theorists such as Simmel, and insights from outside disciplines such as animal behavior and animal welfare.

Graduate Student News

Four of our Master's students completed their theses in the 2009-2010 academic year. The titles of their theses are noted below. We wish each and every one of them success in their post-graduate professional lives.

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| Fall 2009 | Mississippi Mud: Social Vulnerability and Risk in Hurricane Katrina's Wake | Pribanic, Kelli |
| Fall 2009 | Caretaking and Conflict: the Quality of Nursing Home Care for the Fragile Elderly in a Changing Society | Prehn, Nancy |
| Spring 2010 | The Movement for Community Inclusion of Persons with Intellectual Developmental Disabilities: Albany County, Wyoming 1950-1975 | Obermiller, Donna |
| Spring 2010 | Determinants of Online Health Information Seeking: Extending Anderson's Healthcare Model to Examine Choices Made About Health Information Sources. | Panas, Lawrence |

Alumni News



J. D. Rottweiler earned both his B.A. (1990) and M.A. (1992) in sociology from our department. After he left UW, he earned a Ph.D. from the University of Utah. His primary area of interest is in cultural studies and social mobility. After stints at several colleges, he became executive vice-president for academic services at Central Wyoming College. He was also very active in community and state-wide initiatives, serving on the board of a homeless shelter in Fremont County and on the Riverton Police Foundation Board. This past year he became the 11th president of Cochise College in Arizona. Congratulations, J.D.!



Nancy Muecke earned her M.A. in sociology from the University of Wyoming in 1996. She went on to earn a Ph.D. in 2008 from Iowa State University in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies with an emphasis in Community College Leadership. She served as interim executive dean and chief academic officer at St. Luke's College in Sioux City and as associate dean of instruction at Western Iowa Tech Community College. In August, she became Provost at Ellsworth Community College in Iowa Falls, Iowa. Congratulations, Nancy!



Kristen Rohde earned a Master of Arts in Sociology with a minor in Statistics from UW in 1999. After graduating, she returned to her home town of Portland, Oregon and began a career in applied public health research and evaluation. For the past seven years, she has worked with Program Design and Evaluation Services (PDES), a unique research and evaluation unit within both the county and state government Public Health Division. PDES provides evaluation support to county and state programs, initiates and conducts applied research studies, and contracts with organizations across the country to improve community health, shape public policy, and reduce health disparities.

Specializing in the field of tobacco control, Kristen has worked on projects to evaluate and inform state-level tobacco control programs. To date she has 12 publications in the scientific literature along with numerous research reports and presentations. She was the project manager for a study examining biomarkers for smoking-related carcinogens among nonsmoking employees exposed to secondhand smoke while at work in Oregon bars. Results were published in the *American Journal of Public Health* and in mainstream media (e.g., *Time Magazine*), and were used to advocate for policies to protect workers from secondhand smoke.



Dr. Margaret “Margie” Zamudio passed away on December 25, 2009 in a tragic accident. She was 45 years old. She was born and raised in Los Angeles, California and attended UCLA as both an undergraduate and graduate student. She received her BA in 1989, MA in 1991, and PhD in 1996, all in sociology.

Margie came to the University of Wyoming in 2002, joining the faculties of the Sociology Department, the Chicano Studies Program, and the Women’s Studies Program. She was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in Spring 2009. Her scholarship focused on issues of social justice, immigration, race, class and gender. Her book, *Critical Race Theory Matters* (with co-authors Russell, Bridgeman, and Rios), was published by Routledge this fall. Before she died, she had begun a major research project on the socio-economic forces behind the immigration of El Salvadorian women in the 1950s and 60s.

Margie loved the outdoors. The mountains around Happy Jack had a special place in her heart. She was an avid cross country skier, mountain biker, and hiker. She also loved camping in the Medicine Bow Mountains—the North Fork of the Little Laramie in particular.

A memorial service was held on January 15th at the University of Wyoming. An outpouring of testimony remembered Margie as a friend, scholar, colleague, mentor, and social justice activist. She is survived by her many family, friends, colleagues, and students who will miss her intelligence, compassion, and sense of humor. She will be especially missed by her dog Harley.

Those wishing to honor Margie can donate to the Margie Zamudio Memorial Fund at the UniWyo Federal Credit Union in Laramie. The fund will support a UW scholarship in her name, administered by a scholarship committee outside the Department of Sociology.

Selected Faculty Refereed Publications

Professor Donna Barnes had her manuscript, *The Louisiana Populist Movement: Mobilization, Political Opportunity, and Framing*, accepted for publication by Louisiana State University Press. Its anticipated publication date is Spring 2011.

Professor Malcolm Holmes published “Community Characteristics and Methamphetamine Use in a Rural State: An Analysis of Pre-Incarceration Usage by Inmates,” (with Aaron Roussel and Richard Anderson-Sprecher) in *Crime and Delinquency*, 2009.

Professor Richard Machalek published “Evolution, Biology, and Society: A Conversation for the 21st Century Sociology Classroom” (with Michael Martin) in *Teaching Sociology*, 2010. He and Martin also published “Evolutionary Theory Seems So Easy’: Reply to Lucal and Hanson,” in *Teaching Sociology*, 2010.

Professor Anna Zajacova published “Educational Degrees and Adult Mortality Risk in the United States” (with Rogers, Everett, and Hummer), in *Biodemography and Social Biology*, 2010; “Body Weight and Health: A Longitudinal Analysis by Sex and Race” (with Burgard) in the *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 2010; and “Socioeconomic and Race/ethnic Patterns in Persistent Infection Burden Among U.S. Adults” (with Dowd and Aillo) in the *Journal of Gerontology: Medical Sciences*, 2009.

Professor Margie Zamudio collaborated with Russell, Bridgeman, and Rios on a book, *Critical Race Theory Matters*, which was posthumously published by Routledge Press in September 2010.

Sociology Distinguished Speaker



Professor Quee-Young Kim invited **Dr. Christopher Chase-Dunn**, Distinguished Professor of Sociology & Director of the Institute for Research on World Systems at the University of California-Riverside, to UW during the Spring 2010 semester. The International Studies Program and the Department of Political Science contributed financially to the Distinguished Speaker event.

Chase-Dunn has pioneered a global perspective that focuses on trade networks, alliances, wars and cultures and the role of these factors in the evolution of local networks into global world systems. He gave a talk, “World Historical Evolution and Global State Formation,” on March 29, 2010 that was well attended and was followed by an extended question-and-answer session. He also led a more specialized seminar on the methods that social scientists use to compare “world systems,” identifying the strengths and weaknesses of various methods for drawing comparisons over very long periods of time. He then shifted to a discussion of the research projects of the faculty and students participating in the seminar and asked probing questions, particularly in regard to methodological issues. The seminar was held at the Cheney Center on the morning of March 30, 2010.

Staff News



The department considers itself very fortunate to still have **Elaine Force** as its Office Associate. Her accounting skills and exemplary service are commendable. She is our only staff member now, so she is carrying a heavy load. But she manages somehow to stay very upbeat and cheerful, which students and faculty certainly appreciate!

In Memoriam & Special Funds

Chet Meeks Memorial Fund: This fund was established by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at UW, Oliver Walter, his wife Sidney Walter, and his sons Andy and Brett Walter. They wanted to honor Chet Meeks, one of our former students who died from cancer in January 2008. The fund is used to award a scholarship to one of our graduate students for summer research. Donors include those who wish to honor Chet, as well as others who wish to support our only graduate scholarship fund. **The department is making a big push to raise an additional \$12,000 for this fund within the next year or two in order to secure a state match of \$50,000. So please give serious consideration to supporting the Chet Meeks Memorial Fund as part of your tax-deductible charitable donations this year!**

The Flittie Scholarship Fund: Professor Ed Flittie was head of the Sociology Department for 15 years. The Flittie Scholarship is an undergraduate scholarship fund that was established by Professors Audie Blevins and Kathy Jensen after Flittie's death in 1987. As a testament to the long-term influence of a teacher, students of Ed Flittie are still contributing to the fund. Alumni who never knew Professor Flittie, but who wish to help fund undergraduate scholarships, are also major contributors.

The Wilbourne Excellence Fund: Amy Johnson Wilbourne earned both her B.A. and M.A in sociology at UW in the 1990s. She and her husband, John Wilbourne, established the Wilbourne Excellence Fund, which is a wonderful resource for the department. The fund is used to support educational enrichment activities. We have used it in the past to pay for visiting speakers, but the fund is very flexible and can be used in support of any educational enrichment activity. The department is deeply grateful to the Wilbournes for their generous annual donations to this fund.

General Donor Information

Many of you have supported the department through financial contributions. The faculty, staff, and students are very appreciative of your support. Past donations have helped fund invited speaker programs, activities for our student club (OASIS), student merit scholarships, and student research projects.

The easiest way to make a monetary donation is with a credit card through the secure online UW donation web link: <https://uwsecureweb.uwyo.edu/GIVEONLINE/>. Choose the College of Arts and Sciences from the menu options. In the "Further Instructions" box, specify sociology as the recipient. Please also indicate whether your donation should go to our general foundation fund or one of our special funds discussed above.

If you prefer to mail your donation, please cut out and send the form below to the University of Wyoming Foundation, 1200 East Iverson Street., Laramie, WY 82070-4159.

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Department of Sociology

Dept. 3293, Room 406, Ross Hall
1000 E. University Ave.
Laramie, WY 82071

(307) 766-3342

E-mail: sociology@uwyo.edu

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