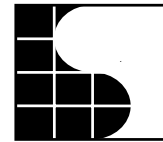


The Student Sociologist

A semi-annual newsletter for students and their departments from the American Sociological Association



Fall 2004

STUDENTS: GET INVOLVED IN ASA!

Involvement with the national association sociology can be a valuable experience early on in one's career and is a great way to begin creating networks with other members. It is never too early to get involved with the American Sociological Association! There are several ways in which students can participate in the American Sociological Association.

How to Become a Student Member of the ASA: Students can become members of the ASA by filling out a Membership Application, which are available online: <http://www.asanet.org/members/membership.html> Student Membership dues are \$16, and students are required to purchase a journal subscription (\$20-\$35). Memberships run for the calendar year only and are not pro-rated.

The Benefits of Membership

All memberships include a subscription to the newsletter *Footnotes*, published 10 times per year, that will help undergraduate and graduate students keep abreast of current news, issues, research, debates, and announcements in the field. In addition, student membership includes one selection from the eight journals published by the ASA. Other benefits include:

- ♦ Voting privilege in the annual elections
- ♦ Various discounts on ASA publications

Sections

An ASA section is a group of members with a common substantive interest area. There are 43 Sections covering a wide range of substantive areas at this time. You may join as many Sections as you wish.

Each section has its own officers and council. All voting members, including students, are eligible to hold offices in sections. Some sections offer awards and prizes for distinguished scholarship and service. Many have special incentives for students such as dissertation prizes or special sessions for dissertations in progress. Section participation is an excellent way to enhance involvement in ASA and sociology.

For more information on Sections, visit www.asanet.org/sections/general.html.

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Applying to Graduate School

By: Jean Beaman

Academic and Professional Affairs

So you have finally decided what you want to do with your life – attend graduate school in sociology! While obtaining your Masters or PhD degree does not take your entire life, it will take several years and therefore is a decision that should be made wisely. Applying and choosing a graduate school involves a lot of research and preparation.

The first step involved in applying to graduate school is research, research, research. There are many characteristics of a graduate school program. Talking to people at departments will help you narrow down your choice. Ask trusted faculty members at your undergraduate institution for suggestions of schools that fit your interests. Also begin to think about who you will ask to write you letters of recommendation; most schools require two to three. Make sure it is someone who knows your work and interests. A recommendation that is blandly positive will be useless if it is not clear to a graduate committee that the recommender is familiar with your work.

Once you have talked with your professors, check out the Web to do more legwork. Fortunately, most schools have comprehensive websites with helpful information on their graduate programs including admissions requirements, courses, faculty, and degree requirements. Many schools also list their graduate students with their contact information. It is good idea to contact them with questions. They can provide “insider” information about being a student at that institution and often tell you things that the school itself will be reluctant to. Ask them about their experiences with faculty, the department, and the school itself. Investigate whether there are faculty who share your interests and how established they are at that institution. Talk with the Director of Graduate Studies. Try to

acquire a sense of the department. Other factors to consider are mentoring opportunities, opportunities for professional collaboration with faculty, financial aid and funding, location, diversity (of both faculty and student body), ratio of undergraduate to graduate students, and department culture (including level of competitiveness among students, etc.).

Besides the Internet, there are many resources that provide helpful information. The American Sociological Association’s *Guide to Graduate Departments* is updated every year and provides an overall picture of various graduate departments (though is not a ranking). It includes types of financial aid available, the number of degrees conferred in the previous year, special programs and areas of expertise, faculty members’ areas of interest, and tuition rates. More information on this publication can be found at <http://www.asanet.org/pubs/ref.html>.

The National Research Council, which ranks schools every ten years, and *The US News and World Report* rankings (www.usnews.com) can also be helpful. They convey the general reputation of departments, though they probably should not be used as the primary criterion for choosing a school. The top schools are very competitive and some lower-ranked schools may fit your interests better. It is also a good idea to apply to at least one “safety school,” where you are certain to be accepted. It will give you bargaining power with other schools if you have more than one acceptance in hand. It is important to keep your options open when choosing schools. The earlier you do this background research, the better.

By the fall, you should have taken the GRE (Graduate Record Examination) which most schools require. Be sure to take the test early enough for scores to reach schools which can take several weeks. While taking the GRE can be overwhelming, remember that it is only one part of the application process.

Admission to graduate school depends on many other things, including GPA, recommendations, writing samples, and the personal statement. The personal statement is an opportunity to speak directly to the Admissions Committee so it should be taken seriously. You need to address why you are interested in graduate study and why you are interested in a particular school. Most graduate applications are now online and supplemental materials are mailed. It is best to submit your application early.

Once you have submitted your application, you have entered the agonizing waiting period. You can still discuss your interests with faculty at the schools to which you have applied and investigate outside funding opportunities. For many of you, this is the first time you have had to relax in months.

Once you are accepted to schools, you should consider visiting them to narrow down your decision. You should arrange to speak with faculty and students while visiting to get a sense of the overall environment. Most schools require you to make a decision by April 15th. So compare your offers and decide which school is right for you!

MINORITY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Apply for 2005-2006 academic year!

Through its Minority Fellowship Program (MFP), ASA supports the development and training of minority sociologists in mental health. Funded by a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), the MFP seeks to attract talented minority students interested in mental health issues and to facilitate their placement, work, and success in graduate programs throughout the U.S.

Sociological research on mental health and mental illness is germane to core areas of

emphasis within the NIMH specifically, and the National Institutes of Health more generally. Research on the social dimensions of mental health includes attention to prevention and to causes, consequences, adaptations, and interventions.

MFP applicants can be new or continuing graduate students. However, the MFP is primarily designed for minority students entering a doctoral program in sociology for the first time or for those who are in the early stages of their graduate programs. MFP applicants must be applying to or enrolled in sociology departments which have strong mental health research programs and/or faculty who are currently engaged in research focusing on mental health issues.

MFP Fellows are selected on the basis of their commitment to research in mental health and mental illness, academic achievement, scholarship, writing ability, research potential, financial need, and racial/ethnic minority background. Specifically, applicants must be members of one of the following racial/ethnic groups: Blacks/African Americans, Latinos/as (e.g., Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans), American Indians or Alaskan Natives, and Asians (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Southeast Asian), or Pacific Islanders (e.g., Hawaiian, Guamanian, Samoan, Filipino). Fellows must be citizens or non-citizen nationals of the United States, or have been lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence and have in their possession an Alien Registration Card.

The application deadline for the 2004-2005 academic year is **January 31, 2005**. For more information, please visit our website www.asanet.org/student/mfp.html or contact ASA Minority Affairs Program; American Sociological Association; 1307 New York Avenue NW, Suite 700; Washington, DC 20005-4701; minority.affairs@asanet.org

2005 ASA ANNUAL MEETING

August 13-16, 2005

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Philadelphia Marriott Hotel
Loews Philadelphia Hotel

**Comparative Perspectives,
Competing Explanations:**

Accounting for the Rising and
Declining Significance of Sociology

ASA Centennial
100th ASA Annual Meeting
More information at
www.asanet.org/convention/2005/index.html

**CREATING A SENSE OF PLACE
AT THE ANNUAL MEETING:
THE ASA HONORS PROGRAM**

The ASA Honors Program is currently accepting applications for its 32st annual gathering, to be held at the 2005 ASA Annual Meetings in Philadelphia, from August 12-16th. The Honors Program allows talented undergraduate students to attend the Annual Meeting as a learning laboratory where they have the opportunity to attend both general sessions and those crafted especially for the Program. Participants in the program often remark that it is an excellent way to meet professional sociologists and other students.

The ASA Honors Program began in 1974 as a teaching demonstration for introductory sociology. At the 1981 Annual Meeting at Toronto, William Foote Whyte, then ASA President, suggested that the Honors students become participant-observers of

ASA meetings, and this has continued to be an activity of the Program to this day. The Honors Program became an official ASA program in 1992. Dr. Kerry Strand of Hood College currently serves as the sixth Director of the Honors Program.

By participating in the ASA Annual Meeting through the Honors Program, undergraduate students in sociology can become an integral part of the meeting environment with a cohort of other students. Most share hotel rooms and develop lasting friendships with other sociologists at early stages in their careers.

At the 2005 ASA annual meetings in Philadelphia, Honors Program students will: Attend a special Honors Program Reception and other events where they interact with other undergraduate sociology students; Participate in an Honors Roundtable session as well as ASA events including ASA First-Timers' Welcoming Party and regular paper sessions and roundtables; Learn all about the activities, sections, and governance of the ASA; Meet and talk with sociologists representing graduate programs around the country; and Attend "Conversations With ..." sessions with prominent sociologists that are reserved for Honors Program students.

Participation in the Honors Program requires nomination by a sociology faculty member at your college or university. Your completed application, including the faculty recommendation letter, are due in the office of the ASA Honors Program Director by **February 25, 2005**. After that date, applications will be accepted if places are available on a first come, first served basis.

For more information and application materials, please visit our website <http://www.asanet.org/student/honors/> or contact: Kerry J. Strand, Ph.D.; Hood College; Sociology and Social Work 401 Rosemont Avenue; Frederick, MD 21701; strand@hood.edu

Get Involved with State and Regional Sociological Associations!

Information on various regional, state, and aligned sociological groups can be found on our website at:
<http://www.asanet.org/governance/aligned.html>.

Information on state and regional association meetings can be found at:
<http://www.asanet.org/meetings/regmtgsch.html>.

Use this opportunity to connect with other sociologists near you!

Learn more about the Student Forum!

All students who join ASA as student members automatically become members of the Student Forum, receive the mailings and electronic communications, and have access to the Forum's programming.

The purpose of the ASA Student Forum is to strengthen students' connections to the American Sociological Association and to the discipline. The Forum provides a framework for facilitating students' active participation in ASA and the continued growth of student members in the Association. The Forum encourages professional development and service, fosters the exchange of information and the enabling of networks among student members, and functions as a bridge to the substantive interests, activities, and areas that constitute the Association (e.g., ASA sections, the Annual Meeting, publications, and substantive programs). To accomplish these purposes, the Forum proposes sessions for the Annual Meeting, communicates and works with ASA students throughout the year, and provides a limited amount of

funding on a competitive basis to assist students with the cost of attending the Annual Meeting.

For more information check out the website:
<http://www.asanet.org/studentforum/index.html>

What Kind of Job Can I Get with a Sociology Degree?

Persons holding a Bachelor's degree in sociology are frequently employed in the helping professions, in business, and in various public sector positions, especially those dealing with social programs and their implementation. Usually, they are not employed in jobs with the title "sociologist," since that title requires graduate training.

Employment opportunities for those with Bachelor's degrees in sociology include entry-level positions in the following areas: administration, advertising, banking, counseling (family planning, career, substance abuse, and so forth), community planning, health services, journalism, group and recreation work, marketing and market research, sales, teaching (if certified), human resources/personnel work, social services, and social research.

Sociology is a liberal arts major with an advantage. In addition to knowledge in specific course areas such as sociology of families, communities, and organizations, you will learn social research design, statistics, and data analysis. These will be useful to you as you enter the job market.

Applied Sociology and Sociological Practice, What are they?

Increasingly, undergraduate and graduate students are entering applied and clinical practice rather than working in academic and pure research settings after graduation.

Twenty percent of ASA members currently work outside the academy. The recent emphasis on Public Sociology (2004 Annual Meeting) showed a myriad of ways to apply sociological methods, concepts and insights from many workplaces. Both the *Society for Applied Sociology* (SAS) and the *Sociological Practice Association: A Professional Organization of Clinical and Applied Sociologists* (SPA) are dedicated to promoting and supporting sociological practice in applied and clinical areas. Interestingly, because the organizations are similar in their goals and missions, they are currently in the process of merging into one organization.

Established in 1978, SAS is a non-profit organization dedicated to “using and implementing sociological skills and insight to providing solutions to social and organizational challenges. SAS provides a forum for sociologists and others interested in applying sociological knowledge, and seeks to enhance understanding of the interrelationship between sociological knowledge and sociological practice. Sociologists can find resources to increase the effectiveness of applied sociological research and training.” For more information check out the SAS website at: www.appliedsoc.org/

The SPA, originally called The Clinical Sociology Association is “an international organization of sociologists and other social scientists that are interested in applying sociological knowledge to bring about positive social change. . .at any level of social organization from the micro to the macro.” SPA has a certification program for Phd-level sociologists to have a professional credential that allows them to receive 3rd party payments, undertake research in some hard-to-access settings, and collaborate with other licensed professionals (e.g., psychologists, social workers, and medical personnel). More information can be found at the SPA website: www.socpractic.org

CAREER PUBLICATIONS FOR STUDENTS!

Directory of Programs in Applied Sociology and Sociological Practice (2000)

This directory contains three articles and listings for 22 institutions that offer degrees in Applied Sociology. \$7/members, \$11/non-members

Careers in Clinical Sociology (2003)

This booklet provides a detailed description of what clinical sociology is and how to prepare for a career in that field. It also includes different jobs and profiles of people in those jobs. Single copies free; multiple copies 50 cents each.

To order, call our Customer Service Department at (202) 383-9005 x389. For more information on other career publications and careers in sociology visit us at: www.asanet.org

How Do Sociology Courses Relate to Skills?

Effectively communicating your abilities to others involves translating your educational experience into specific skills and knowledge areas. Although employers routinely seek employees with particular skills, they may not be aware that a college degree in sociology provides. If you detail your skills in widely understood terms, you are apt to catch the attention of prospective employers. Your key task in looking for a job is to demonstrate to each potential employer that your sociology degree is relevant to the position. For example, if you have taken courses in Social Research Methods or participated in research projects, you can state that you have acquired analytical skills as a result. If you have had specific training in survey research or

observational methods, be sure to make this clear--always be as precise as possible.

In addition to basic functional skills, a sociology BA provides more specialized transferable skills that can be highlighted in your resume. Substantive sociology courses may equip you for more specialized jobs.

For example:

Classical and Contemporary Theory courses provide training in analytical thought and tighten your grasp on central sociological concepts and theories.

Statistics, Applied Sociology, and computer-based Social Data Analysis courses contribute to your ability to conceptualize problems and develop research strategies. Such courses help prepare you for working in government research offices, public opinion polling agencies, marketing firms, and other research or program development settings.

Group Process, Social Psychology, or Personality and Social Structure courses increase your understanding of team dynamics and informal organization; they also help you develop such interpersonal attributes as empathy and tolerance toward diversity in interpersonal styles and group roles.

Social Problems contributes broadly to many careers, as they address the most critical issues facing North American society today, including crime, substance abuse, violence against women, poverty, homelessness, and AIDS.

Organizational Theory and Bureaucracy, one of sociology's core concerns, provides tools for analyzing and understanding organizational problems such as improving productivity and quality, dealing with downsizing, and managing corporate reorganization.

World Systems Theory, Social Inequality, Law and Society, Social Change Theory, Comparative Sociology, Rural Sociology, Sociology of Development, Political Sociology, Economic Sociology, and Cultural Anthropology provide insight into other societies that will be valuable to the American corporate world as it ventures beyond its national borders.

Minority Groups and Race Relations helps develop a keen understanding of the complexities of diversity in modern society; this will benefit you generally in any position and specifically if you are seeking employment in the human resources department of a firm or agency with a multiracial work force and/or a multicultural clientele, or plan to work in ethnically diverse communities.

Urban Sociology, Community Sociology, and Sociology of Education courses can be put to good use in an urban planning agency or working with youth.

Sociology of Women/Gender Roles and Sociology of Families provide valuable perspectives for working in agencies that serve women or focus on women's policy and research (shelters, rape crisis centers, government agencies, or think tanks), and, more broadly, for all types of human resources and social services work with families, women, and children.

Criminology, Sociology of Law, Law and Society, Women and Justice, Sociology of Adolescence, Crime and Criminal Justice, Penology and Corrections, and Deviance and Social Control offer valuable preparation for jobs in agencies that deal with criminal justice, probation, parole, juvenile delinquency, gangs, crime statistics, and policing.

Social Psychology, Sociology of Emotions, The Individual and Society, and Sociology of Mental Health provide knowledge of human motivation and

attitudes, so are valuable for sales, marketing, advertising, counseling, community organizing, and social service agency work.

Sociology of Aging, Gerontology, Aging in Society, Social Policy of Aging, Sociology of Health and Illness, Medical Sociology, and The Life Course provide excellent background for positions in direct delivery of services to seniors, insurance companies, or policy, legislative, and government organizations that focus on aging.

Medical Sociology, Sociology of Health and Illness, Social Policy, and Sociology of Mental Health help prepare you for a wide variety of positions in the health field relating to service delivery, research, and policy.

Depending on your specific interest, adding additional courses from other departments may be helpful. If you are planning a career in business, it might be advantageous to supplement your sociology courses with a few courses in economics, management, marketing, accounting, and so forth. Computer science courses are also useful, especially if they enhance your data analysis skills. If you are interested in a career in the social service sector, a few psychology or social work courses can be an asset. Political science is useful if you are considering a career in public administration.

**Call for Applications:
Sociologists for Women in Society
Undergraduate Social Action Award**

Deadline: November 1, 2004

What is it?

The Undergraduate Social Action Award (formerly known as the Internship Award) is designed to carry on the SWS tradition of acknowledging, affirming and

inviting students to participate in SWS. The three winners of this award will be invited to participate in the SWS Winter Meeting and present a panel on how their internship experience advanced the purpose of SWS by working to improve women's lives and to create feminist social change.

Who is Eligible?

Students who have participated in an undergraduate internship or faculty-supervised social action work (e.g., internships, community-based research, activism, community work) within the past year.

Requirements:

Students must submit a five-page paper (postmarked by November 1, 2004) which describes:

- * the history, structure, funding sources, and purpose of the organization or community with which they worked.
- * the initial goals and work accomplished during the internship or action work.
- * an assessment of how initial goals were met or altered.
- * a summary of what was learned during the internship or action work.
- * an appraisal of how the internship or action work fit with the rest of their academic education.
- * how the internship or action work served to improve women's lives and create feminist social change.

Award:

Winners will be invited to the SWS Winter Meetings in Miami, Florida held January 27-29, 2005. The winners will present a panel on their experience and how it advances the purpose of SWS to improve women's lives and create feminist social change.

Announcement of winners will be made on November 15, 2004.

Submit proposals to:

Tracy E. Ore
Chair, SWS Social Action Committee
Dept. of Sociology & Anthropology
Saint Cloud State University
353 Stewart Hall
720 Fourth Avenue South
Saint Cloud, MN 56301
teore@stcloudstate.edu

Electronic Submissions welcome and encouraged

**Call for Applications:
The Peter K. New Student Prize
Competition**

Deadline: December 31, 2004

Eligibility

The Competition is open to any person who was registered as a student at the graduate or undergraduate level in a college or university during the calendar year, 2004.

To be eligible, the manuscript should report on research that in large measure has not been previously published. The competition will be limited to manuscripts that have a single author; multiple-authored papers will not be eligible.

The winner of the Competition must be available to attend the annual meeting of the Society in Santa Fe, New Mexico (April 5-10, 2005) and present the paper. The winner is also expected to submit the paper to the SAA journal, Human Organization, for review and possible publication.

Topic

The research and the paper should use the social/behavioral sciences to address in an applied fashion an issue or question in the domain (broadly construed) of health care or human services.

Timetable

All submissions must be received in the Business Office of the Society by December 31, 2004. The judging for the Competition will begin in January. The winner will be announced in early February of 2005. The winner will be recognized and the paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society in Santa Fe, New Mexico, April 5-10, 2005.

Prizes

The winner of the Competition will receive a cash prize of \$1,000 as well as a sum of \$350 to partially offset the cost of transportation and lodging at the annual meeting of the Society. In addition, the winner will also receive a Steuben crystal trophy. Depending on the quality of the submissions, the jurors may elect to award a second and third place prize (\$250 and \$100, respectively).

Additional information can be found at:
<http://www.sfaa.net/pknew/pknew.html>

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DEPARTMENT**