2006-2007 Section Committees

Nominations Ctte.
Anne Biddlecom, Chair
James Raymo
Paula England

Otis Dudley Duncan Award Ctte.
Charles Nam, Chair
Lynne Casper
Reynolds Farley

Student Paper Award Ctte.
Kelly Musick, Chair
Michel Guillot
Ted Mouw

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Greetings all! The life cycle of a Section Chair is longer than that of a fruit fly -- but not by much. By the time you read this, all the committees will have been appointed, the sessions for the annual meeting established, and I shall be looking forward to handing things over to my successor, Larry Wu. And, of course, I shall have just started.

I would like to believe that organizations exist for something other than perpetuating their own existence. My brief tenure as Section Chair is devoted to two basic principles: (1) that population has an essential role and pedigree in sociological theory and research; and (2) that, as sociologists, we should continue to support the strong role of sociology in the interdisciplinary fields of population science and demography. With respect to the latter, there are two levels of interaction: One is intellectual -- that many aspects of population growth and change are well apprehended as social processes. The other is institutional -- departments of sociology provide the preponderance of academic positions for population research in the United States and Canada.

Now, having adopted these basic tenets, it is up to the rest of you to embrace, ignore, or reject them. My minor contribution in advancing these views has been in the naming of our sessions at the annual meeting -- I have tried to emphasize the SOCIOLOGY in the study of population processes -- and by episodically haranguing the rest of you with these themes. I think that, in politics, they call this "staying on message."

In the event, now is a good time to mention the Section’s activities at the annual meeting in August, 2007, in New York City. We have three “titled” sessions to which you can contribute (and come!):

1. Population Health Research: Sociological Perspectives - Organizer: Michael Spittel;
2. Social Aspects of Low Fertility Societies - Organizer: Harriet Presser;
3. Societal Implications of International Migration - Organizer: Melissa Hardy;

and Craig St. John is organizing roundtable discussions. Please think about these last as a useful forum for presenting your
research, and learning about the research of others.

In addition, we are co-sponsoring, with our confrères in the Section on the Sociology of the Family, an “invited session,” organized by Judy Seltzer, Suzanne Bianchi, and Phil Morgan. It will feature remarks on the “new directions” initiative for family and population studies currently being undertaken on behalf of NICHD.

**Hold these dates:** First, submissions for these meetings are not due until 17 January - see [http://www.asanet.org/page.ww?section=Meetings&name=2007+Call+for+Papers](http://www.asanet.org/page.ww?section=Meetings&name=2007+Call+for+Papers) - so there is still lots of time to get these in! Second, our Section date this year is Saturday, 11 August. This will be the day of our sessions, the roundtables, and the business meeting. The Family day “backs” on ours (i.e., it is on Sunday, 12 August), and will include the invited session on “new directions.” Because of this back-to-back setting, Pam Smock - who wears at least two hats as a Council member of the Section on the Sociology of Population and as Chair of the Section on the Sociology of the Family - and I have agreed to hold a joint Population/Family reception this year. This will presumably take place late afternoon or early evening on Saturday the 11th, although there is (always!) the chance that I am wrong, in which case you will hear from me again. The reception will include the presentation of awards and will likely be held off-site, at a convivial location to be determined by Larry Wu and his minions. I know that Larry is all over this, because I have threatened that if an agreeable location is not found, we shall all be showing up in his living room for the event ... (Thanks in advance to Larry and Pam!)

We have also been doing a few things to strengthen the organization. Nan Johnson and MSU are exploring ways to take over and maintain the web site; thanks to Nan and MSU going forward, and thanks to Ann Pebley and UCLA for past service. Our move to an award for the best paper (in addition to the Otis Dudley Duncan Award for the best book, and the annual award for the best graduate student paper) has put our committee structure somewhat at odds with our by-laws. Larry Wu is heading up a committee that is attempting to square goals and procedures. (Can you believe how much stuff I have already been able to off-load on Larry already?). In the interim, we are continuing with the alternating year structure for awards as originally envisaged when the new paper award was introduced. This means that this year we are giving out the Duncan Award. Charlie Nam heads an illustrious committee of former award winners, including Lynne Casper and Ren Farley (who is not coincidentally
the Duncan Chair at Michigan! The student paper award committee is ably chaired by Kelly Musick, a past winner; Kelly is joined by Michel Guillot and Ted Mouw.

Finally, although our membership is robust, it could always be better; and the more sociologists we have who are doing population research, the greater the potential for our section as a vehicle in the two fields (sociology and population studies). I am working with the Council to target free riders — er, remind our colleagues of the need to become members of the section.

Message from Nan Johnson, Secretary-Treasurer

In this, my inaugural newsletter, I thank you for entrusting this job to me for the next three years. The Fall 2006 issue is meant to get things going. As I learn the ropes, my future issues may get longer and fuller with digital photographs. I am searching for a webmaster/mistress to help me reactivate the dormant website that Anne Pebley launched for our Section several years ago at UCLA.

Please help me make this newsletter useful and relevant. I would like to receive notices of new positions available in the Sociology of Population, new books published, calls for papers at conferences or symposia, and personal announcements such as job changes and sabbaticals. For the Spring 2007 issue, please email these items by April 1 to me at johnsonn@msu.edu.

First Biennial “Distinguished Contributions to the Sociology of Population” Award

The winners of the first biennial Distinguished Contributions to the Sociology of Population Award are David Cutler and Grant Miller for their article, “The Role of Public Health Improvements in Health Advances: The Twentieth-Century United States,” in Demography, vol. 42, no. 1, pp. 1-25 (Feb., 2005).

In this article, Cutler and Miller provide compelling evidence that the development and implementation of clean-water technologies (filtration and chlorination) were a major factor in rapid mortality reduction during the early twentieth century in a sample of 13 major U.S. cities. This paper epitomizes high-quality work in Social Demography for many reasons, not least of which is how the authors place their study within the historical
context of mortality decline, successfully interweave data from various sources, and draw conclusions for the potential for these cost-effective technologies to achieve significant declines in mortality in today’s developing countries.

The award committee consisted of: Emily Rosenbaum, Fordham University (Chair); Alaka Basu, Cornell University; and Mark Fossett, Texas A & M.

2006 Graduate Student Paper Award

Filiz Garip was the winner of the best student paper award. Ms. Garip is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Sociology at Princeton University. Her paper was on social capital and migration in Thailand. The selection committee was chaired by Leah VanWey, and included committee members Sarah Burgard and Lori Hunter.

Filiz has also won a dissertation improvement award from the National Science Foundation, and anticipates receiving her Ph.D. in Sociology later this year. Congratulations, Filiz!

Position Announcement

Title: Assistant Professor in Quantitative Methods

The Department of Sociology at Michigan State University seeks applications for a tenure-stream assistant professor position, specializing in quantitative methods. We seek a sociologist with research experience who can establish a research program in quantitative methods. The faculty member’s research and teaching also are expected to engage with the overall departmental theme of Global Transformations and with one or more of the Department’s focus areas: Family and Gender; Food, Environment, Agriculture, Science and Technology; Health and Well Being; or Urban, Race and Migration. Successful candidates will have experience with or demonstrate potential for securing outside funding. This is an academic year appointment. The Ph.D. is required for appointment as an assistant professor. Preference will be given to a scholar who will contribute to the department’s theme, Global Transformations, and/or for a person with international research experience or demonstrated interest in international issues. Michigan State University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution. Candidates should submit a letter of interest that includes a description of teaching philosophy and research statement, curriculum vita, and names of four references to Dr. Tom Dietz, Search Committee
Chair, 316 Berkey Hall, Department of Sociology, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1111. Further information on the department and the position announcement are available on the department website: http://www.sociology.msu.edu/. Initial review of applications will begin December 1, 2006, and continue until a suitable candidate is identified. Position available August 16, 2007.

Date position is available: August 16, 2007

Organization: Michigan State University
Address: 316 Berkey Hall, Department of Sociology, East Lansing, MI 48824-1111

Representatives: Dr. Tom Dietz, Search Committee Chair; Dr. Janet Bokemeier, Department Chairperson
Contact information: (517) 353-8763 or tdietz@msu.edu

Application deadline: December 1, 2006, or until a suitable candidate is identified

MSU is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution.

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