

November 2007



ALABAMA - MISSISSIPPI SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

A-MSA Fall Newsletter

Join Us In Starkville for the 39th Annual meeting of the Alabama- Mississippi Sociological Association

From the President

I would like to take this opportunity to invite y'all to the 39th Annual Meeting of the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association. The meeting will be held February 21-22, 2008 on the campus of Mississippi State University. Plans are well under way to make this a memorable and enlightening event. On behalf of all of us here at Mississippi State University, I cordially invite you to join us in Starkville.

If your last visit to Starkville was more than a few years ago, you will be amazed at how much the area around MSU has grown and continues to

grow. Visitors to Starkville have the opportunity to observe the historic highlights of the town, especially the revival of downtown Starkville and the Cotton District. For the outdoor enthusiast, there is the 48,000 acre Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge, located just 13 miles south of the city. There are also three golf courses for those interested in spending some time on the green.

Starkville is at the crossroads of the past, present, and future and this powerful combination makes Starkville a progressive and exciting place to visit.

Ciao,
Mimmo

"Applying Sociology: Engaging the Public Sphere"

February 21-22, 2008

at

Mississippi State University

Online Submissions: www.a-msa.org



What's New and How to Participate!

From the Program Chair

In anticipation of the upcoming annual meeting of the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association, there are a few things we would like to



bring to your attention now. This year ALL abstracts and papers will be submitted and received elec-

tronically. The website will be up and running by November 15 and you may be submitting abstracts electronically at that time. Registration will also be available online. In addition to the undergraduate and graduate student paper competitions, we will also be having a poster session and entries can be individual, group, or school. On a final note, we encourage you to share this information with your

colleagues and students and encourage them to attend this year's meeting and help us make this one another great success! Stay tuned to the A-MSA website for updates on annual meeting activities and deadlines by visiting us at www.a-msa.org.

Kristi M. Fondren
2007 Program Chair
Mississippi State University
PhD Candidate in Sociology

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An Important Date to Remember:

February 1, 2008

- DEADLINE for submitting electronic abstracts
- DEADLINE for poster and paper competitions
- DEADLINE for banquet registration
- DEADLINE for conference room rates for all hotel accommodations

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ALABAMA - MISSISSIPPI SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Annual Meeting Details

The 39th Annual Meeting of the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association

It is our hope that the 39th Annual Meeting will be a productive and memorable experience for all of you. To help facilitate this experience, we have a dynamic speaker for our plenary address.

PLENARY SPEAKER

Dr. Leif Jensen is a Professor of Rural Sociology and Demography and The Pennsylvania State University.

Dr. Jensen's research interests are found within three broad areas. The first is social stratification with emphasis on issues of poverty, employment, and household economic strategies in rural and urban areas. The second is demography with special attention to migration and immigration. The third is the sociology of economic development with a focus on Latin America.



Dr. Leif Jensen

His recent and ongoing research projects include studies of under-employment in the United States, the movement of immigrant groups to new destination communities in the U.S., the circumstances of youth in migrant farm worker families in Pennsylvania, and patterns of spatial inequality in Latin America.

He teaches courses on poverty in the United States, the sociology of economic development, and problems of children and youth in developing countries. Past teaching responsibilities have included social research methods, and population and development.

Call for Nominations!

Distinguished Service Award

Criteria for the Distinguished Service Award include: 1) ten or more years of AMSA membership and 2) a strong record of involvement in Association governance and annual programs.

Outstanding Service Award

This award requires that the individual has been a member of the AMSA for a minimum of six years (not continuously). This award is presented to an individual when during the course of his/her career,

there are noteworthy accomplishments which bring special recognition to the sociology profession and to the AMSA.

Please forward your nominations to the chair of the Awards Committee, Kim Brackett, by email kbrackett@aum.edu or via telephone (334) 244-3943.

All nominations should include a brief statement about the qualifications of the candidate and preferably a current curriculum vita.

Deadline for suggestions is November 30.

Discrimination based upon race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or veteran's status is a violation of federal and state law and MSU policy and will not be tolerated. Discrimination based upon sexual orientation or group affiliation is a violation of MSU policy and will not be tolerated.

SESSIONS/ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

Session Chairs/Discussants

Please consider taking the opportunity and volunteer yourself as one of the session chairs/discussants for this year's annual meeting. If you have ideas for a particular session that you would like to chair, please send that along as well.

Roundtable and Paper Session Topics/Ideas

Do you have interesting ideas or suggestions that we should consider incorporating into this year's meeting? If so, please contact the program chair and share your ideas and insights. Maybe this will develop into a roundtable or session for you to chair!

Teaching Sociology Through Distance Learning: Best Practices, Concerns, and Opportunities

There has been quite a bit of interest in developing a roundtable specifically on teaching sociology through distance learning at this year's meeting. If you are interested, please contact Dr. Craig T. Robertson via email (ctrobertson@una.edu) or by phone (256.765.4530).

For inquiries or volunteering your time to any of the above, please contact the Program Chair, Kristi McLeod Fondren at amsa2008@ssrc.msstate.edu. We look forward to hearing from you.

AWARDS CEREMONY

Our awards ceremony will consist of a banquet and a program and will be preceded by a wine and cheese reception. The wine and cheese reception will be held in the lobby of the unique Hunter Henry Alumni Center located on the campus of Mississippi State University.

The wine and cheese reception will give us the opportunity to enjoy stimulating conversations with colleagues and students, as well as our conference speakers. The awards banquet and ceremony will also be held at the Hunter Henry Center which will allow us to continue our conversations once the wine and cheese reception moves into the main ballroom.



REGISTRATION

Membership Dues for 2008 are \$20.00 for Faculty/Staff and \$5.00 for Students.

Registration Fees for the 2008 A-MSA Annual Meeting are \$25.00 for Faculty/Staff, \$45.00 for Non-members, and \$5.00 for Students. **Banquet Fees** ** (*must be pre-paid*) are \$25.00 for Faculty, Staff, and Non-Members and \$25.00 for their Guests; and \$15.00 for Students and \$15.00 for their Guests. ***Banquet fees must be pre-paid and the deadline for payment is February 1st.*

For more information on dues and registration fees, please contact A-MSA Treasurer Clark Hudspeth at hudspeth@jсу.edu. Sociology Dept., 308 Brewer Hall, Jacksonville State University, 700 Pelham Road North, Jacksonville, AL 36265-1602. Phone: 256-782-5620

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel accommodations are provided by the following venues for the 2008 Annual Meeting in Starkville. Each has something unique to offer whether it's the location, the rate, or its convenience. Be sure to mention A-MSA when you call in order to receive the conference rate. The rooms at all locations are currently blocked but will be released on February 1, 2008 to the general public.

OFF CAMPUS LODGING

The Greater Starkville Development Partnership provides helpful resources for visitors, including information on area attractions, recreation, dining, and maps (city/county and attractions) at <http://www.starkville.org/tourism/default.asp>.

Comfort Inn & Suites

Adjacent to Mississippi State University, Comfort Suites is a short walk to the Hunter Henry Conference Center and within walking distance of restaurants and entertainment spots in the Cotton District. All Comfort Suites are smoke free. Amenities: Continental Breakfast, Refrigerator and Microwave, Handicapped Rooms/Facilities, Exercise Gym, and Wireless (Adapters Available). Rates are \$109 + tax.

801 Russell Street
Starkville, MS 39759
662.324.9595

Historic Hotel Chester

Hotel Chester is individually listed on the Nation Register of Historic Places. Located in the Old Main District of historic downtown, shops, restaurants and entertainment spots are abundant & within 2 blocks walking distance. Situated on the corners of Jackson and Main Streets, Hotel Chester is 1/2 mile from MSU via Main Street. Your stay includes a full, cooked-to-order a la carte breakfast each

morning, served in a setting of venerable charm. Big Daddy's Restaurant and Bar offers a casual atmosphere with games, cool jazz or blues tunes in the air, and friendly, Southern service. Other amenities: Handicapped Rooms/Facilities, High Speed Internet Access, and Wireless. Rates start at \$84 and cap at \$140.

101 North Jackson Street
Starkville, MS 39759
662.323.5005 or Toll Free 866.325.5005

ON CAMPUS LODGING

Lodging accommodations are also available on campus. Both Herbert Hall and Butler Hall can be found using an interactive map of Mississippi State University at <http://www.msstate.edu/web/maps/>.

Butler Guest House

The Eugene Butler Guest House is located near the northeast corner of Davis Wade Football Stadium, in the heart of the Mississippi State University campus. The two-story, 8-room building provides comfortable lodging and arrangements and puts you within walking distance to the State Fountain and Bakery, Perry Cafeteria, and Cullis Wade Depot Welcome Center and Museum, and Barnes and Noble Bookstore. Ample parking is available, and a guest parking pass is provided for each vehicle. Amenities: Refrigerator and Microwave, Handicapped Rooms/Facilities, Cable, Guest

Pass to Sanderson Center for Nominal Fee, and Wireless. Rates are \$74.90.

45 Walker Road
Mississippi State University, MS 39762
662.325.4140

Herbert Hall

Located on Mississippi State University campus, Herbert Hall offers 64 residence hall style rooms with shared restrooms and showers at reasonable prices. Guest rooms have at least two single beds and a sink. This is a great location for visitors wanting to experience campus life. Ample parking is available, and a guest parking pass is provided for each vehicle. Room Amenities: Refrigerator and Microwave, Telephone, Cable (HBO), Wireless. Other Amenities: Laundry Facilities, Common Kitchen, Pool Table, and Vending and Ice Machines. Rates: \$30 single, \$35 double, and \$40 triple occupancy.

170 Herbert Street
Mississippi State University, MS 39762
662.325.2867



A-MSA Committees

Critical committees for the upcoming meeting and their chairpersons are listed below.

Awards—Kim Brackett, Auburn University Montgomery

Nominations—Gary Long, University of Mississippi

Graduate Student Papers—Tom Kersen, University of North Alabama

Undergraduate Student Papers—David LoConto, Jacksonville State University

Poster Session—Mahasin Owens-Sabir, Jackson State University

If you have suggestions for any of the committee chairs, or would be willing to assist in their tasks, they would be appreciative of your input.

News from around the A-MSA

ALABAMA

Sociology program at Jacksonville State University had another very good year and the program continues to grow. JSU finished the Spring 2007 semester with 122 majors. This marks the greatest number of undergraduate majors in the state of Alabama. Given that six years earlier the JSU program had 49 majors, we are very proud of this accomplishment.

Our faculty were interviewed by a variety of outlets. CNN, The Discovery Channel, the City of Ariano Irpino, Italy, *Albatros Magazine*, the *Tulsa World*, as well as numerous local radio and newspaper agencies conducted interviews with Sociology faculty. Topics of discussion revolved around the expertise of the Sociology faculty.

Students became very involved in research and presentations at regional conferences. Between the Mid-South Sociological Association meeting in Lafayette, Louisiana; the Alabama Mississippi Sociological Association meeting in Montgomery, Alabama; and the Atlantic Coast Pragmatism Conference in Blacksburg, Virginia, a total

of 25 students attended, with six papers coauthored with JSU faculty.

The Sociology faculty have been active in research and writing, with a total of 12 papers presented at regional conferences last year, with seven papers currently under review for publication.

Three papers were accepted for publication/published in refereed journals: (1) Dr. Tina Deshotels, with Dr. Craig Forsythe “Strategic Flirting and the Emotional Tab of Exotic Dancing,” *Deviant Behavior*; (2) Dr. Clark Hudspeth, Dr. Xiaohe Xu and Dr. John P. Bartkowski “The Role of Cohabitation in Remarriage,” *The Journal of Marriage and Family*; and (3) Dr. David LoConto and Paige R. Arrington “Pragmatism and grieving: Incorporating Mead and Dewey to understand the grieving of people with mental retardation.” *Sociological Spectrum*.

Student organizations continued to be active facilitating their endeavors. The Sociology Club became more social with monthly meetings at The Sports Nut in Jacksonville.

AFSA, WISE, and SAFE also were instrumental in the development of the student population by helping register students, staff, and faculty to register to vote; as well as the annual Clothesline Project; and Peace Fest were again highly successful.

What's happening with your college or university program? Let us know so we can highlight your program and its accomplishments!!

Dr. Nicole Carr of the University of South Alabama visited the campus and department on February 1. Dr. Flynn talked with students about the graduate program in

Sociology at the University of South Alabama.

Dr. Hudspeth continued his work as Treasurer of the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association. Dr. Deshotels was elected Chair of the Membership committee of the Mid South Sociological Association. Dr. LoConto was elected President Elect for A-MSA. Our faculty also served on numerous other committees for regional associations as well as university, and public and private corporations. Overall, the 2006-2007 year continued a positive trend for us.

(continued on p. 6)

News (continued from page 5)

MISSISSIPPI

Our Graduate Program at Mississippi State University offers M.S. (Thesis and Non-Thesis Option) and Ph.D. degrees in sociology. Major areas of study include criminal justice and criminology; environment, community development, and rural sociology; family and gender; social demography; and social inequality. Additional study is available in complex organization, health and well-being, race and ethnicity, sociology of religion, and urban sociology.

Financial support is available in Fellowships for Minority Students, the Loftin Fellowship, Research Assistantships, and Teaching Assistantships.

The department boasts one of the larger concentrations of sociological expertise in the Southern region as evidenced in the number of graduate faculty (26) holding the Ph.D., enrollment of graduate students (60), placement and success of doctoral graduates, number and frequency of publication, level of funding for grants and contracts,

and facilities and other infrastructure for research and education.

The Department is over 60 years old and has graduated well over 100 doctoral students. For additional information please contact Dr. Xioahe Xu, Director of Graduate Studies at (662) 325-2495 or xu@msstate.edu.

Contact us if you would like to have your program highlighted in the next newsletter coming in January (amsa2008@ssrc.msstate.edu).

Professional Opportunities

Call for Papers

The AMSA journal, the AMSA Online Sociological Review, housed at the University of Mississippi, is ready to receive submissions. Edited by Gary L. Long (salong@olemiss.edu), with assistance from Elise S. Lake, Minjoo Oh, and Ming Tsui, the journal has an editorial board, and an established protocol. The journal will publish peer reviewed papers, essays, and comments authored by both faculty and students. One of the purposes of this new journal is to encourage faculty-student collaboration at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. By policy the journal will give space to papers from undergraduates.

Send submission to:

Dr. Gary Long
Dept of Sociology and Anthropology
The University of Mississippi
P.O. Box 1848
University, MS 38677-1848
662/915-7297
salong@olemiss.edu

Authors Needed

Dr. Kim Brackett (Auburn University Montgomery) is editing an encyclopedia for Greenwood Press entitled *Battleground: Families*. There are many interesting topics still in need of authors. The entries receive a by-line

and authors are eligible for honoraria. If you are interested in writing a short entry (3000 words) on a current controversy in family, or finding out more about the project, please contact the editor at kbrackett@aum.edu or (334) 244-3943. This would be a great opportunity for graduate students (or even advanced undergraduates) to get their feet wet in the world of publishing.

Job Openings

The Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work seeks qualified applicants for two tenure-track entry level Assistant Professor positions to begin in Fall 2008. PhD in Sociology required for appointment at the Assistant Professor level, but ABDs will be considered for appointment at the level of Instructor.

Primary area of teaching and research will be in (1) criminology/deviance/criminal justice and (2) social demography (loosely defined) with ability to teach quantitative methods at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Secondary area of specialization is open, though some aspect of inequality is preferred with the social demography position. Maximum teaching load is 2/2.

Programs offered include BA, MS, and

PhD in Sociology. The Department consists of 23 faculty members (16 in Sociology, 7 in Anthropology and Social Work), over 200 undergraduate majors, and over 50 sociology graduate students.

Applications should include a vita, a letter describing teaching and research interests, samples of scholarly work, and any supporting materials that demonstrate teaching and/or service achievements. Materials should be sent to:

Chair, Criminology Search Committee or Social Demography Search Committee (as appropriate),
Department of Sociology,
Anthropology, and Social Work,
P.O. Box C, Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, Mississippi 39762.

Candidates should have at least three letters of recommendation sent directly to the Chair of the Search Committee. Review of applications will begin October 15, 2007, though applications will be accepted and reviewed until the position is filled.

Mississippi State
UNIVERSITY

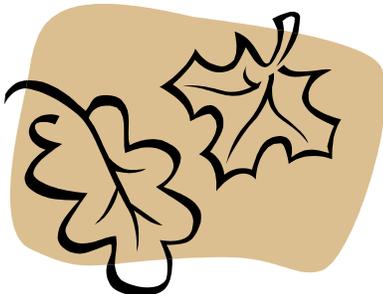
Recap of 38th Annual Meeting in Montgomery 2007

The 38th Annual Meeting of the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association was held on February 22-23, 2007 at the Auburn University Montgomery campus. The theme of the meeting was Sociology: Unique and Universal. The meeting was quite a success and covered a variety of sociological topics. In addition, the workshops, panel discussions, displays, and paper sessions were all unique with universal application.

The plenary session address "Putting Social Capital to the Test: Does It Really Spend Like Other Forms of Capital?" was offered by Dr. Mark LaGory, Professor and Chair of Sociology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. As an urban sociologist, Dr. LaGory encouraged us to consider the influence of social capital for individual and community well-being.

In the common area, Drs. Terry Winemiller and Paul Sharp, both of AUM, presented an ongoing poster session entitled "The Gallows: A Geographic Information System of Lynching and Executions in Alabama (1871-1930)." The session demonstrated the use of GIS for sociological research.

Several publishers displayed a wide selection of sociological literature for perusal. Attendees had the



opportunity to request complimentary copies of books, as well as the receipt of complimentary items.

The banquet was held in the Gold Room at Troy State University Montgomery. Prior to the banquet, attendees had the opportunity to visit the Rosa Parks Museum.

Dr. Ansley A. Abraham Sociologist and Director of the Southern Regional Education Boards' State Doctoral Scholars Program provided banquet attendees with valuable information about the mission and success of the Doctoral Scholars Program. The goal of the program is to increase the number of minority students who earn doctoral degrees and seek to become college and university faculty members.

The banquet also proved to be a perfect time to recognize several outstanding students who participated in the paper competition. The following students were recognized for the undergraduate paper competition:

First Place: Matt Casteel and Jon-Mark Olivier of Millsaps College whose paper was entitled "Higher Education? The Perceptions of the Social and Psychological Functions of Marijuana Use Amongst College Students"

Second Place: Maggie Morgan and Susan Mixson of Millsaps College with a paper entitled "There's Never Enough Time: Working Mothers and the Second Shift"

Third Place: Nicole Garrett of Auburn University Montgomery whose paper was entitled

"Academic Dishonesty Among Auburn University Montgomery Students"

The winner of the graduate student paper competition was Eric Atchison of Delta State University. He received recognition for his paper entitled "Human Capital and Community Cooperation: A Focus on After-School Programs in Mound Bayou, Mississippi."

Additionally, two outstanding members of A-MSA were recognized. Vaughn Grisham was recognized with the Outstanding Achievement Award in recognition of his contributions to the organization and to the discipline of sociology. Larry Hall was recognized with the Distinguished Service Award reflecting his commitment to the organization and continuing contributions to organization governance.

***"Annual Meeting
Attendance Continues
to Grow"***

One last positive note worth mentioning. Attendance for the A-MSA Annual Meeting continued to grow in 2007 at Auburn University Montgomery where we had a total of 98 people in attendance—45 faculty and staff, 48 students, and 5 guests. This is up from the 2006 annual meeting at Ole Miss in Oxford where there were 85 people in attendance—33 faculty and staff, 45 students, 7 guests.