WELCOME NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS!

On August 31st, the Sociology Department hosted an Orientation for incoming BA/MA, MA and PhD students. After a meeting filled with information about navigating UMass Boston and a campus tour, new and current students, accompanied by some faculty and staff, were treated to a late afternoon tour of Boston Harbor. Great day and great group.

Seven doctoral students [Sharbari Ganguly, Rebecca Hooper, Bill McNicholas, Elizabeth Morrow, Kendra Pugh and Isaac Yablo] began working toward their PhDs in September. With backgrounds in criminal justice, human services, and business, these students join a large existing group of doctoral students taking an active role in research and teaching at UMB.

Nine MA candidates [Kathryn Bell, Stephanie Brown, Aaron Fatato, Ashley Gonzalez, Kenesa Holness, Sam Klibaner, Wendy Mota, Haily Piccinin, Robert Rice, and Joseph Silcox] join the department this fall along with 3 BA/MA [Hannah Bouhov, Nahalia Carless, and Michael Thomson] students who will begin taking graduate courses while completing requirements for their bachelors. We are so happy to have so many enthusiastic and well-qualified students choosing UMass Boston for their graduate education.

GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTORS

**Andrea Leverentz** – GPD, PhD in Sociology – Dr. Leverentz is primarily a qualitative researcher interested in issues of the community context of crime and gender and crime. You can find her in Wheatley 4-019.

**Keith Bentele** – GPD, MA in Applied Sociology – Dr. Bentele focuses on Stratification, Inequality, Political Sociology, and Public Policy. You can find him in Wheatley 4-018.

At the University of Massachusetts Boston teaching is one of three pillars of faculty excellence, along with research and service. The Graduate Teaching Program (GTP) offers graduate students an opportunity to learn about teaching from the university’s many expert instructors and to develop their own skills and reflective capacities in ways that are useful in both academic and non-academic settings. Students who complete the program will receive a notation on their transcript—a significant form of documentation that can be referenced on résumés, graduate school and job applications.

There is no application for the GTP. Students already enrolled in graduate programs that include teaching assistantships and teaching seminars can simply register. Check the Graduate Studies website for registration information. Please note that the GTP does not arrange teaching opportunities or teaching seminars. Teaching assistantships, when available, are based in the home department. The GTP is designed to supplement and recognize the experience and preparation of teaching assistants without getting in the way of one’s degree progress.

From Our Chair – Paul Benson, PhD

On behalf of the faculty, students, and staff in the UMB Sociology Department, I warmly welcome you to graduate study at the University of Massachusetts Boston!

At UMass Boston Sociology faculty and students combine innovative research with teaching and community service to address questions of social change, diversity, social justice, and sustainability in urban environments. UMB Sociology enjoys an international research reputation in a wide variety of substantive subfields, including criminology, immigration and globalization, gender/sexuality, political sociology, and health. Our award-winning research and teaching and our emphasis on applied sociology and civic engagement provide students with skills necessary for personal intellectual growth, active citizenship, and professional success.

Sociology at UMass Boston is an energetic, exciting, and growing department. There are few better places than Boston and the UMB Sociology Department to study contemporary sociological questions. I welcome you to UMB and invite you to become a part of our sociological experience.
The Graduate Sociology Student Association (GSSA) is here to build a sense of community among the graduate student and the faculty, by providing opportunities to socialize and engage with the larger campus and Boston communities. The GSSA is open to all graduate students in Sociology and is committed to being respectful, resourceful, supportive, and above all, welcoming. GSSA’s mission is to enrich student involvement across all aspects of university life and within the broader community.

The GSSA aims to organize a variety of activities that appeal to students’ diverse interests. Past years activities have included:

- Painting and Wine Party
- Holiday Potluck dinner
- Mother’s Day Peacewalk
- Boston’s Homeless Census
- Other get-togethers

Suggestions / Questions? The GSSA is excited to serve and represent you.

If you have feedback please email Co-Presidents Michelle Crist and/or Tracy Reed at michelle.crist001@umb.edu or tracy.reed001@umb.edu.

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**Graduate Employee Organization**

The GEO here at U Mass Boston is proud to represent all Graduate Assistants in securing fair wages and safe working conditions. Our current contract runs from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2017. Negotiations are currently underway for the next contract cycle. You can certainly get involved by contacting them at:

**GEOUMB**
100 Morrissey Blvd
Quinn 02-081
Boston, Massachusetts 02125
617-287-3109
geo@umb.edu

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**The Graduate Student Assembly:**

Comprised of representatives from each graduate college, the GSA is the graduate student government organization here at UMB. In addition to funding graduate professional organizations, the GSA offers several different types of grants to graduate students to assist their professional development and research. They host a graduate research conference, as well as plan social activities to bring graduate students from different programs together (CC-3-3404.01).

[www.gsa.umb.edu](http://www.gsa.umb.edu)

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**Alumni Update**

**Lena Campagna, PhD 2017,** is working at John Jay College of Criminal Justice as Development Associate and Adjunct Assistant Professor.

**Jay Byron, PhD 2017,** recently started a post-doctoral fellowship at University of New Hampshire with the ADVANCE Program; Increasing the Participation and Advancement of Women in Academic Science and Engineering Careers. This study is funded by NSF.
Returning Student Updates

Kate Price (Doctoral Candidate, PhD Program) winner of the 2017 Mariam K. Chamberlain Dissertation Award from the ICRW. Her “proposed dissertation holds great promise for contributing to how we understand variations in state CSEC legislation, with special appreciation for your commitment to taking an intersectional approach in examining the factors that underpin these variations. This is clearly critical work with the potential to inform policy and profoundly change the experiences of CSEC survivors. This focus on impacting policy change resonates deeply with us at ICRW, as our work aims to turn research insights into pathways of action that improve the lives of marginalized populations.”

Joe completed a thesis on Homelessness and Addiction to implement a Good Neighbor policy that aims to build alliances among residents and service providers to curb crime and disorder stemming from “Methadone Mile.” Through interviews and observation, Pittman will consider how crime, disorder, and stakeholder conflict weakens a neighborhood’s crime-controlling efforts, particularly in the case of Worcester Square in the South End neighborhood of Boston.

New Students in Sociology

Wendy Mota, MA Student
UMASS Dartmouth – Sociology & Social Services, BayPath University – MS Nonprofit Mgmt.

Wendy is Director of Diversity & Accessibility for Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV). Wendy manages and develops statewide, culturally relevant initiatives, programs and projects. Wendy has professional experience as a social worker for state government, domestic violence advocate and as a volunteer for various social justice organizations. Wendy’s areas of interest include racial disparities, immigration and immigrant rights, domestic violence, women’s issues, and civic engagement.

For her contribution in a professional fellowship exchange program sponsored by the U.S. State Department, Wendy was recognized with the “Alumni Impact Award” in 2014. In 2016, for her work and dedication to Latino communities in CT, she was recognized with the “Homenaje a la Mujer Hispana” award from Comisión Homenaje Mujer Hispana.

Adam Pittman (Doctoral Candidate, PhD Program)

Adam was awarded the BARI Research Seed Grant for Fall 2017. His project, Managing Methadone Mile: Good Neighbor Policy in Boston’s Epicenter for Homeless and Addiction Services, is working in partnership with the Worcester Square Neighborhood Association and South End Working Group on Homelessness and Addiction to implement a Good Neighbor policy that aims to build alliances among residents and service providers to curb crime and disorder stemming from “Methadone Mile.” Through interviews and observation, Pittman will consider how crime, disorder, and stakeholder conflict weakens a neighborhood’s crime-controlling efforts, particularly in the case of Worcester Square in the South End neighborhood of Boston.

Joseph Silcox, MA Student
St. Anselm, BA Sociology

Joe first became interested in Sociology when he realized that the discipline encouraged students to research topics that have meaning in their own lives. In his senior year, Joe completed a thesis using qualitative methods to study how students with mild learning disabilities constructed their academic identities based on their strategic social learning disabilities and the relationship to the college educational system, the social impacts of financial technology and community resistance to opioid treatment clinics.

In late August, seven doctoral students successfully completed their substantive comprehensive exams and formally “Advanced to Doctoral Candidacy.” Doctoral Candidacy means that a student has completed his/her coursework and is now engaged primarily in their own research culminating in the doctoral dissertation.

Congratulations to

Erin Cournoyer, Gifty Debordes-Jackson, Meredith Gamble, Emily Lauer, Adam Pittman, Kate Price and Jennifer Skinnon.

Elizabeth Morrow, PhD Student
NYU – BA Tufts University – MA

Elizabeth studies political and historical sociology, particularly the ways identity and intergenerational experience shape political participation, party affiliation, and policy preference.

In addition to her core focus, Elizabeth is interested in the sociology of entrepreneurship, health equity, stratification, and intersectional feminist theory. She is the founder of Yoga by Numbers, and a member of the EasySolar Team at Harvard Innovation Labs.
Who Do You Ask? How do you get information?

Graduate Program Coordinator, Dr. Nicolette Salerno, can assist with the logistical and program issues that sometimes impact your graduate experience. Her office is in Wheatley Hall, 3-008.

We maintain a Blackboard community (you are all members) where you will find forms, student handbook, job listings, university resources and sample dissertations / masters’ theses. We also have a group email list – SociologyGradStudents@live.umb.edu - and will share things through this as well.

Graduate Programs Overview

Graduate study in sociology combines the study of sociological theory with practical training in research methods, statistics and evaluation research. Students are prepared for careers in academia as well as for leadership roles in private and public organizations through stimulating coursework and independent research.

Situated on an ocean-front campus in Boston, UMass Boston is the only public university in the city and provides a high-quality graduate experience at a lower cost than that offered by our neighbors. The concentration of schools in Boston offers a truly engaging environment with many opportunities for collaboration and education at various campuses. Our students also have the opportunity to take coursework in other university departments and receive a truly interdisciplinary graduate education.

Doctoral students complete a 36 program of study including 6 credits of independent dissertation research (with an MA). Masters students also complete 36 credits of coursework and have the opportunity to complete internships and write a master’s paper. Funding is provided (depending on university funds availability) and many students work on campus as teaching and research assistants.

An additional opportunity afforded our graduate students is the Graduate Certificate in Survey Research. Matriculated students can add the certificate to their program of study without going through a separate admissions process and gain the benefit of excellent training in survey methodology and proficiency in the practical aspects of survey design. Offered jointly with the Center for Survey Research, this certificate is a unique program not found elsewhere in Boston that provides tangible skills in survey design and analysis that has proven to be very valuable to our graduates.

The Sociology Department offers students a variety of areas of specialization including social theory, criminal justice, health sociology, social psychology, survey methodology, immigration, race, gender and identity and the sociology of the family.
Announcing our newest Associate Professors!

Dr. Philip Brenner and Dr. Heather Zaykowski were awarded tenure and the rank of Associate Professor this summer. Collectively, they add a tremendous amount to the department with their strong teaching, research and service to the department and the university.

**Philip Brenner**, with Professors Schutt and Buskirk, is working on a launching new high-tech panel study of Bostonians that we’re calling “Beacon: Your City. Your Voice.” Other projects include working with Dr. Jack Fowler and colleagues at CSR on a project funded by the National Science Foundation examining the effect of survey nonresponse on estimates of important indicators of health, religiosity, and civic participation in five Boston area neighborhoods and suburbs. He is also working with research collaborators at Jinan University in Guangzhou and Fudan University in Shanghai on an analysis of trends in survey reports of religious non-affiliation in China.

**Heather Zaykowski** is currently the local research action partner for the Metro Mayor Coalition. In this role, she supports police and community partners in the greater Boston area to better understand individual and community risk for gang activity. In addition, her ongoing research projects include understanding victim crime reporting behavior and victimization risk across different contexts.

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We’d like to begin by welcoming our new cohort of graduate students to UMass Boston. And welcome back to our returning graduate students! We are excited that our academic year has begun with a number of major achievements by graduate students and faculty. Some recent highlights include: Kate Price won an International Center for Women’s Dissertation award for her work on human trafficking legislation policies. Adam Pittman was awarded a seed grant from the Boston Area Research Initiative for his research on community dynamics in the South End and Newmarket areas of Boston. Gifty Debordes-Jackson and Erin Cournoyer just returned from a fall workshop of the UMB-SSRC Transdisciplinary Dissertation Proposal Development program. A number of faculty and students also recently presented their research at the American Sociological Association meeting in Montreal. Professor Solari’s new book *On the Shoulders of Grandmothers: Gender, Migration, and Post-Soviet Nation-State Building* (Routledge) is now out. Professor Aptekar has just begun a new research project on immigration status and higher education, funded by the WT Grant Foundation. Congratulations to all on your successes and accomplishments!! We are looking forward to a productive year ahead. We are not, however, looking forward to the increasingly difficult, and sometimes bizarre, nature of the commute to campus. We recognize that this can be a real burden for many, and we appreciate your patience with this current aspect of our university. We want to take a moment to say that we are consistently working to improve your experience in our program. Please feel free to share your feedback on our programs both positive and negative, as this really does help guide our program development going forward. We are always available if you are having issues or want to discuss exciting plans for your career. We hope you have a wonderful semester!

Keith Bentele  
MA Program Director

Andrea Leverentz  
PhD Program Director
CINZIA SOLARI -- Book Publication, August 2017

On the Shoulders of Grandmothers (Routledge, 2018) uncovers a unique migration of middle-aged women, most grandmothers. Through interviews and ethnographic work with migrant grandmothers laboring as domestic workers in Italy and California as well as with their adult children in Ukraine, this book shows that post-Soviet Ukrainian nation-state-building is occurring transnationally. By comparing the experiences of individual migrants in two different migration patterns—one a post-Soviet “exile” of individual women to Italy and the other an “exodus” of families to the United States—she exposes the production of new gendered capitalist economics and nationalisms that precariously place Ukraine between Europe and Russia with implications for the global world order.

SOFYA APTEKAR co-organized two panels on Food Justice in the Changing City at the annual meeting of the American Association of Geographers, and presented her paper “Cultivating Diversity: Neighborhood Change and Place-Making in an Urban Community Garden” at the AAG.

In addition, Professor Aptekar, along with her colleagues Amy Hsin and Holly Reed of Queens College, have been awarded $600,000 by the William T. Grant Foundation to carry out their study, entitled “Immigration Status and Higher Education: Evidence from a Large Urban University.” The grant will support a three-year project that investigates educational trajectories of undocumented students at City University of New York’s two- and four-year colleges.

PHILIP BRENNER published a paper and presented at the Washington Statistical Society Workshop on Survey Nonresponse.


KEVIN WOZNIAK presented “Race, Politics, and Public Opinion About Justice Reinvestment” at Boston City Hall as part of the Resilience and Racial Equity Speaker Series.

GRANT AWARD – UMASS PRESIDENT’S OFFICE AND THE CREATIVE ECONOMY INITIATIVES FUND

“BEACON—Your City, Your Voice: Building the Boston Area Panel”: Professor of Sociology Russell K. Schutt; Director Trent D. Buskirk and Associate Professor of Sociology Philip S. Brenner; College of Liberal Arts, Center for Survey Research ($30,000)

The team of Schutt, Buskirk, and Brenner (left to right) are creating a survey about social issues and concerns that will give Bostonians a vehicle to voice their concerns, ideas, experiences, and thoughts about a wide range of topics throughout the year, such as poverty, safety, and participation in the arts.

“Boston’s history, as with other cities, teaches us that if such challenges are not quantified, analyzed and addressed, the underlying problems can fester, social conflicts can emerge, and progress can erode. The UMass Boston BEACON project will provide data to meet this challenge,” Schutt said.

BEACON will provide a valuable resource for scholars, policymakers, and government agencies. Regular meetings are already underway with key members of the Mayor’s Office of Urban Mechanics—to identify policy issues of greatest concern—and with Boston Area Research Initiative (BARI) leaders from Harvard and Northeastern—to coordinate survey plans with their “big data” resources. The $30,000 in funding will support the design of survey procedures, the development of a collaborative infrastructure, and data collection for one year.
JOIN OUR COMMUNITY AT UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON!

Graduate Degrees Offered by the Department of Sociology:

- PhD in Sociology
- MA in Applied Sociology
- Graduate Certificate in Survey Research
- Joint BA/MA in Applied Sociology

For more information contact sociologygradprograms@umb.edu

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS FOR SOCIOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENTS

American Sociological Society  http://www.asanet.org/
Annual Meeting, August 2018 Philadelphia, PA

Eastern Sociological Association  http://www.essnet.org/

Watch our video at

https://www.umb.edu/academics/cla/sociology/graduate_programs