



Wisconsin Update

Department of Sociology • Fall 2021

For Sociology Alumni and Friends of the University of Wisconsin–Madison

Inside:

- From the Chair 2
- New Sociology Colleagues 2
- Board of Visitors Update 3
- In Memoriam 4
- Joan Fujimura Retirement 4
- Congratulations, Graduates! 5
- Undergraduate Scholarship Winners 6
- Pandemic-Related Research Projects 7
- WI Idea Book Stems from Course 8

Go Green!

Prefer to receive your annual Wisconsin Update via email? Contact Tina Hunter (thunter@ssc.wisc.edu) to opt in and Go Green!



Beloved Advisor Ellen Jacobson Retires

More than four and a half decades after arriving on campus, Distinguished Undergrad Advisor Ellen Jacobson retired in January. Says Ellen about her love of advising, “I got to be the first person to tell a student to follow their heart and to be mindful of choices, because they each are in the driver’s seat of their own lives. Student after student received this as a revelation and a delight.” Such advice is typical of why Ellen was not only the first student services professional in UW’s College of Letters and Science to earn the Distinguished designation, but also what made her an exceptionally wise colleague and valuable member of our Sociology community.

On her path to Sociology, Ellen followed her own heart and made her own choices. She earned a BA in English and American Lit from Brandeis where she met and subsequently married Richard whom she calls her “college soulmate;” pursued a PhD in literature at University of California San Diego (dissertation topic narrative theory of plot in Dickens); dabbled in freelance photography as well as copy editing; worked with a diversity

program through UW’s Economics department; and advised in Communication Arts.

About her time in Sociology, Ellen says, “Faculty interaction with me was one of the biggest perks of my career because Sociology is so collegial.” She adds, “The students never really changed even as years passed. They were continuously grateful for my advising, which made the job always rewarding.”

Ellen plans to travel to see her daughter Miriam, who is an English professor at the University of Georgia, son-in-law Ari, and grandchild Laila. She also intends to volunteer with local literacy efforts and to update her Madison home.

We wish Ellen a long, happy retirement, with our deep gratitude for her extensive contributions to UW, our department, and generations of students!

Ellen would love to hear from you! Email her at eajacobso@ssc.wisc.edu



Department of Sociology
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



Letter from the Chair

Back to school has been a venture in adjustments this year, as our students, faculty, and staff joined together to navigate and collaborate on our revised reality following so many months of resiliency, uncertainty, and constant change due to COVID-19. The majority of classes are in-person, though innovative hybrid and remote options for both learning and working that emerged while the pandemic raged are being piloted and implemented in our department and across campus.

The department enthusiastically welcomes new faculty members Chloe Hart and Mosi Ifatunji, as well as new undergrad advisor and curriculum planner Lyn Macgregor. Our curriculum constantly is being updated and improved, and we admitted a cohort of 19 talented and promising new grad students. While we were able to successfully teach, learn, and run the department remotely, we are grateful to be able to take steps toward safely gathering again.

I continue to be extremely proud of this department and amazed at our collective dedication to our students, our department, and each other. Our motto of Decency, Excellence, and Diversity reverberates with real meaning as we continue to work together to figure out how to wisely go forward while incorporating the lessons we have learned during lockdown. On behalf of the department, I truly hope that you and your loved ones are safe and well.

On, Wisconsin!

Christine Schwartz, Professor and Chair

New Sociology Colleagues



Chloe Hart (left) has joined us as an Assistant Professor. Chloe received her PhD from Stanford in 2021. Her research investigates the micro- and meso-level mechanisms that contribute to persistent gender inequalities in the contemporary United States. Her latest project investigates the strategies that people use to proactively defend against sexual harassment before it becomes explicit.



Mosi Ifatunji received his PhD from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2011. He joined the Department of Afro-American Studies as an Assistant Professor in 2019, and began a joint appointment with Sociology this fall. Mosi's primary research interests are in racial and ethnic theory, and the methodologies used to study inequality and stratification.



We are very excited to have recruited **Lyn Macgregor** to our team as our new Undergrad Advisor and Curriculum Planner! With a PhD from the department ('10) and more than a decade of experience as associate director of our Holtz Center, Lyn brings a depth and breadth of experience. Says Lyn, "I'm so happy to be back in sociology. Sociology is a major that has so much to offer undergraduates. I love helping students get all they can out of it and helping them prepare for their next steps after graduation."

Engelman named New WLS Director



Associate Professor **Michal Engelman** has been named the new director of the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study, a long-term study of 10,317 men and women who graduated from Wisconsin high schools in 1957. Engelman plans to enhance the study's vitality as a scientific resource for learning about well-being at older ages and across diverse contexts.



Garrow Elected BOV Chair

Welcome to Beth Garrow (BA '77), our new BOV Chair! Says Beth, "It is such an honor to Chair this dedicated Board of Visitors who serve to support and champion the accomplished faculty, staff, and students who make our Sociology Department so special. We have already seen the impact this new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Fund is making and invite others to join us in supporting those who are the fabric of this great department."

The annual *Wisconsin Update* is prepared by the Department of Sociology publications committee:

Tina Hunter (editor), Kim Gonzalez, Eunsil Oh, and Erin Skarivoda.

Design: University Marketing

Follow us on Twitter!
 @UWSoc

New Fund Helps Students Through Pandemic, Aims to Promote Racial Justice



Both fall and spring BOV meetings were held virtually.

The past year has brought increased awareness and a renewed urgency around the issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. In recognition of the fact that financial support can and does make a significant difference toward ameliorating the effects of historical inequities, our Board of Visitors (BOV) created a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion fund through the UW Foundation and Alumni Association. This fund provides resources to nurture, honor, and celebrate the contributions of a rich diversity of students, faculty, and staff who, through research, teaching, and service, improve our collective humanity. So far, it has been used to help students pay for emergency costs during the COVID-19 pandemic, for things like new laptops for working remotely when their old laptops crashed. This fund will be used for a range of initiatives, including:

- Summer research funding
- Funding application and re-enrollment fees for students from groups that are underrepresented
- Providing grants to support visiting speakers
- Emergency financial assistance

We are grateful for the continued support and active involvement of our many alumni and friends, and particularly those devoting significant time as members of our BOV.

You can contribute to the Sociology Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Fund online at supportuw.org/giveto/SociologyDEI or by mail; make checks out to "University of Wisconsin Foundation" with "Sociology Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Fund" on the memo line. Mail to: UW Foundation, U.S. Bank Lockbox, Box 78807, Milwaukee, WI 53278-0807

In Memoriam



Franklin Wilson, much-loved scholar, teacher, mentor and friend, passed away December 22, 2020. Franklin taught at the UW from 1972 to 2007, and served as chair of our department from 1988 to 1991. Donations can be made in his honor to the Franklin Wilson Great People Scholarship at UW–Madison (www.supportuw.org/givefund132816487). His full obituary is available on our website.



Robert Mare, eminent sociologist and demographer, beloved colleague and friend, and generous mentor to many young scholars, passed away February 1, 2021. Rob taught at UW from 1977 to 1998, and served as the director of the Center for Demography and Ecology from 1989 to 1994. Donations can be made in his memory to the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank. His full obituary is available on our website.

Joan Fujimura Retirement



Joan Fujimura has retired as the Martindale–Bascom Professor of Sociology. She received her PhD in Sociology from the University of California–Berkeley and taught at Harvard and Stanford universities before joining us in 2001. She also was a member of the School of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton, a fellow at the Russell Sage Foundation, and a fellow at the Center

for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford. Her award-winning NSF- and NIH-supported research and her numerous accolades have garnered significant recognition across the discipline and beyond. Fujimura has served as the President of the Society for the Social Studies of Science; Founding Director of the Holtz Center for Research on Science and Technology; Founding Director of the Program in Science and Technology Studies; UW–Madison Outstanding Women of Color Award; and Chair of the ASA’s Section on Science, Knowledge, and Technology. She has also served on the Advisory Committee for the Asian American Studies Program and later joined the AAS Executive Committee. She has also played an important role in campus diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, notably in her membership on the UW–Madison Diversity Planning Committee (2013–14) and Vice Provost’s Climate Survey Task Force (2017), among many other efforts. Fujimura’s recently published article on race, ethnicity, ancestry, and genomics in Hawai’i in *Historical Studies in the Natural Sciences* is part of a series of articles that demonstrate how sociocultural concepts of race have become embedded in genetic research infrastructures, the knowledge consequences of which she and her co-author show to affect how geneticists and the public think about race as biological. Her recent research has also focused on “how not to talk about race,” the title of a recent BuzzFeed article that attempts to change the discourse on race in the US. That work will culminate in a book, *The Embedding of Sociocultural Concepts of Race into Genomic Infrastructures and Its Sociopolitical Consequences* (working title). Joan will continue to conduct research and writing as professor emerita and complete her two-year term as President of 4S. She has also been spending time with her daughters and her husband Kjell.

INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING OUR UNDERGRADUATES’ INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES?

Consider donating to the Joann and Joe Elder Undergraduate Fund in Sociology (account 132751323). You’ll both honor Joann AND further the educational goals of our students!

SuccessWorks is a center for personal and professional development. Just for College of Letters & Science students, it helps students discover themselves, find opportunities, and develop skills needed for success after graduation by connecting them with advisors, alumni mentors, and employers. To learn how you can join other alumni in helping students find success, see careers.ls.wisc.edu or contact Mike Kruse at mkruse@wisc.edu

Congratulations, Graduates!

Our undergrads celebrated May graduation with a modified yet energetic celebration held in Camp Randall, and the department created a celebratory video to share with students and their loved ones. While no guests were allowed, the Camp Randall ceremony was broadcast to all who wanted to participate virtually. Winter commencement featured Sociology alum and US soccer team member **Rose Lavelle** as speaker. Departmental celebrations for our PhD recipients were held virtually, and we celebrated our students' accomplishments by creating a congratulatory video.



Keynote speaker Rose Lavelle, Sociology alum





Yuxin Liu



Yumeng Wang



Yahvi Mahendra



Alicia Lorta



Madison Johnson

Undergraduate Scholarship Winners

Yahvi Mahendra, a senior with majors in Sociology, Health Promotion & Health Equity, who also is pursuing a global health certificate, won the Andrea Michelle Sperka Scholarship. Mahendra intends to seek a Master's in Public Health and serve as a global health policy analyst. The Sperka Scholarship, which honors the memory of former student Andrea Michelle Sperka, is awarded each year to a junior or senior who has demonstrated a commitment to working on behalf of others. Throughout her undergraduate career, Andrea carried a demanding academic schedule while working to help meet her educational costs. In addition, Andrea served as a volunteer, including her work with homeless children in Madison and in a township in South Africa. Andrea lost her life in a tragic accident in Botswana following a study abroad experience. This fund was created by her parents to honor the memory of their beloved daughter by helping other students with similar goals.

The Alfred Reschke Social Science Scholarship was awarded to four seniors this year. **Madison Johnson** has a double major in Sociology and Legal Studies, and plans to attend law school to work as a court-appointed defense attorney in the juvenile court system. **Yuxin Liu** is majoring in Sociology, Education Studies, Math and Statistics, and seeking certificates in German and History. She intends to pursue graduate work in sociology

of education. **Alicia Lorta** is majoring in Sociology and Gender & Women's Studies, and plans to pursue a master's degree in Social Work and/or Public Health. **Yumeng Wang** is majoring in Sociology and Economics and pursuing certificates in East Asian Studies and Education Policy Studies. She plans to seek a position at the All-China Women's Federation. The Alfred Reschke Social Science Scholarship was created in memory of Alfred Reschke, a former student and assistant in our department.

Students by the Numbers

Our department continues to be home to one of the nation's best sociology programs. There are currently **170** Sociology undergraduate majors and **129** PhD students. This year, **21** PhD students have earned their degrees. We have **19** incoming PhD students who were selected from an exceptionally competitive pool of applicants.



Sarah Frank



Lindsay Cannon



Ariane Ophir



Emma Romell



Annaliese Grant

Grad Students Undertake Pandemic-Related Research Projects

Teams composed of both graduate and undergraduate researchers have started new research projects related to the COVID-19 pandemic. **Sarah Frank** and **Ariane Ophir** developed a mixed-methods project, “Dating in the Time of COVID-19,” to study dating and intimacy during the pandemic. Using a survey in Spring 2021 along with newspaper data and Reddit posts from the previous year, this team of graduate researchers with a few undergraduate researchers unearthed important preliminary results, determining that there is a conflict between the pandemic lockdowns and traditional sexual scripts; the structural opportunities for meeting someone casually were interrupted by the physical shut down. **Annaliese Grant** developed an online survey for participants who were

recruited through social media to analyze media use before and during the pandemic. This project demonstrates how demographic characteristics shape the ways individuals have changed their media use during this time of great global stress. **Lindsay Cannon** and **Emma Romell** fielded a novel survey to investigate changes in couples’ division of unpaid labor and relationship quality in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. In June 2020, the investigators surveyed a sample of highly educated, white, heterosexual women partnered to men. Preliminary findings show that male partners of this group did not take on more housework, cognitive labor, or childcare during the pandemic, despite a substantial increase in the time male partners spent at home.

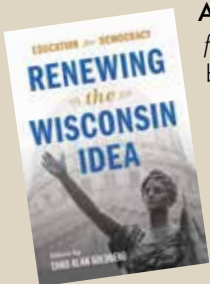


Badger Bridge

Whether you're a new alum still dazed from finals week or one who remembers when cars zoomed down State Street, the Badger Bridge is for YOU! This website is designed to connect alumni: jobseekers with employers, mentees with mentors, and questions with answers. Check it out at BadgerBridge.com.
It's **FREE!**

WI Idea Book Stems from Course

Rising from the success of our course and public lecture series, "Forward? The Wisconsin Idea, Past & Present," Professor **Chad Alan Goldberg** has compiled and edited *Education for Democracy: Renewing the Wisconsin Idea*. This book explores the Wisconsin Idea, including a preface by retired staff member **Patrick Brenzel** whose passion and commitment spawned the course, and contributions from acclaimed scholars of the Wisconsin Idea.



Like many such higher education institutions across the United States, the University of Wisconsin's mission, known as the Wisconsin Idea, emphasizes a responsibility to serve the needs of the state and its people. Using the Wisconsin Idea as a lens, *Education for Democracy* asserts that public higher education institutions remain a bastion of collaborative problem solving.

Examinations of partnerships between the state university and people of the state highlight many crucial and lasting contributions to issues of broad public concern such as conservation, LGBTQ+ rights, and poverty alleviation. The contributors advocate the value of state universities and humanities education as a public good, contending that they deserve renewed and robust support. The book is published by the University of Wisconsin Press.

