Greetings from the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice. As we prepare to return to ‘normal’ operations for the 2021-2022 academic school year, we want to share with you all a summary of some of our Department’s activities during the previous year and some of our aspirations for the future.

In the sections that follow you will see how the Department’s focus on social justice is normally realized through the opportunities we provide students, alumni, and members of the local community. We strive to connect alumni with current students to discuss career opportunities and how to prepare for the workforce. Numerous scholarships are provided through the Department to help students who have financial need and/or to reward outstanding student achievement. Multiple Student Organizations are sponsored by the Department, each of which allows students to develop their interests, engage others and develop projects and events that are important to them.

You will also see how faculty members have remained active in their disciplines and continue to adjust their teaching and research endeavors to the demands of response to the pandemic. Professors remain active and focused on returning to school this fall.

Many sections that follow end with contact information. Our hope is to maintain close ties with you all and promote activities that interest you as well. If you would like to share your experiences with students and / or support the Department, we welcome your input, ideas, and creativity. Feel free to contact us and we look forward to the day when we can have you on campus again working with students and participating in projects and events.

—DR. KENNETH BOLTON
The last time I spoke to Rebecca Hensley, I didn’t know it would be the last time. We spoke, shared, reflected, and one week later, on November 27, 2020, she moved on. I, and everyone who knew and loved her, was stunned. At some point in our relationship I guess I began to take her presence for granted and assumed that she would be an incredible force of transformative energy forever. I still don’t feel sadness when I think of her as much as a sense of emptiness; a void once filled by a strong, fragile, spirited fighter for humanity. When tasked with writing a remembrance for this year’s newsletter, I realized that nothing I could say could sum up the way we all felt about Rebecca so I decided to let the last email I received from her in May 2020 describe her journey to and from Southeastern:

“It was not easy for me to come to Louisiana in 2007. I had never fit between the lines anywhere, had never capitulated quietly to rules, had frustrated many a supervisor, had outraged communities from time to time, and presented with the option to spend 9 months in a temporary position as an instructor at Southeastern Louisiana University, deciding to move from a sizable city in Florida with all that the location and city life had to offer and risk my psyche and perhaps my life (being a bit on the dramatic side) felt like pushing off the shore in a leaky boat going who knows where. I didn’t think I would be welcomed, and, to be fair, I was often uncomfortable and not uncommonly marginalized in a hundred ways by many I found at what became my new campus home.

“I had previously taught as an adjunct for nearly twenty years while serving in a series of social service positions. And I loved teaching, loved meeting new students, loved the interface as we explored new horizons together, loved sociology which I discovered in my forties. But my life had been so cavalier in some ways that I had never imagined “retiring” someday to receive a pension and when, after being at Southeastern for five years, I
received a letter telling me I was now “vested.” I had to call HR to ask what that meant. “Now, at 74, I am stripping my office walls of the radical posters, the awards, and the memories deposited there by literally thousands of students I have come to know since my trepidatious arrival. I do so with tears and a full heart. I have watched my students grow and leave to carry what they learned into an uncertain but exciting future. I have watched my department embrace and include me and my ideas despite its discomfort with their perspective. I have watched our campus change because of my presence and the energy that it helped to feed. And I have observed my own growth as an academic, as a teacher, as a student, and as a human being – due in no small part because of the very special relationship I have had the joy of developing with my Department Chair since he brought me here for that 9-month temporary gig.

“I am leaving to dedicate the rest of my life to doing prison abolition work in Louisiana, an adventure I have been prepared for since 1972, but I am leaving a piece of my heart in Fayard Hall. Look for me ranting in 107, under an umbrella in front of Starbucks, walking into the Vonnie Borden theater at the end of a 10-hour day. I could still drop by and, if I have time, I will.”

I can still hear Rebecca’s voice echo through Fayard Hall 107. I still savor the taste of the many shots of espresso I convinced her to buy for me. I frequently look to see if she is walking around campus…maybe I just don’t recognize her with her mask. I will always remember her, that woman, in my face, prodding me to be more critical, more aware, and more active. For all who really knew her and really loved her, we know that the struggle continues. Our work, our vision, is her enduring legacy.
The Department Bids a Fond Farwell to...

PROFESSOR GERALD MCNEILL

Mr. Gerald McNeill, longtime Instructor of Geography and the Department's Undergraduate Coordinator for academic advising, retired at the end of the fall, 2020 semester. We wish him all the best and hope that retirement treats him well and with much respect; however, his absence has been sorely felt in the Department and he has been missed.

Mr. McNeill was a joy to work with. He was selfless, tireless, and always concerned about students, fellow faculty members, and the University. The first day I became Department Head, Mr. McNeill introduced himself to me as a 'company man' who was willing to do anything that the Department needed of him to be successful. I found his honesty, collegiality, empathy, and love for teaching refreshing. Over time, his energy and willingness to take on any challenge helped make the Department and its activities relevant. Mr. McNeill was always the one member of the faculty that I could rely on to be predictably stable and ready to help when needed. Transitioning from the tug boat business to education and from New Orleans to Hammond, Mr. McNeill became an important member of our Department and leaves a legacy of friendliness and cooperation. In his time here, Mr. McNeill taught numerous geography classes in the classroom and online. He was always concerned about his students' education and always willing to do whatever it took to help students be successful, even if it cut into his personal space and time. He understood education as a vocation rather than a mere job and dedicated countless hours to mentoring and academic advising.

Join me and the rest of the faculty in wishing Mr. McNeill a well-deserved retirement and extending best wishes for his future.

—Dr. Kenneth Bolton
"I'm thrilled to be a part of the department and the Southeastern family. Currently, I'm finishing my PhD at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro with the working title "Thresholds of Independence: Sovereignty Resource Utilization in the West Indies," which explores the use of state sovereignty as a commodity on small islands in the West Indies/Caribbean region. At Southeastern, I'm primarily teaching Intro to Geography and World Regional Geography classes, with the hopes of teaching some upper-level courses in regional geography and political geography in the future. I look forward to formally meeting everyone in the department as soon as everything gets back to 'normal!'"

—Prof. Shane Canup
Exciting News Includes...

Scholarship Updates

Like many academic years, the Scholarship Committee has had a fairly busy time making scholarship decisions. This includes not only awarding the scholarships to deserving students, but also reviewing academic records of current awardees and making it possible for students to recieve financial support.

During the Fall semester of 2021 Tori Rodriguez was awarded the Leslie Fluke MSAS Scholarship.

The Tom Sullenberger Endowed Scholarship in Criminal Justice was awarded to Rebecca Shields during the 2019-2020 academic year.

Lastly, the Jerry Salomone Endowed Scholarship in Sociology was awarded to Sociology major Carrie Tharpe during the 2019-2020 academic year.

The Departmental Scholarship Committee will be reviewing applications this fall for recipients of the three above listed scholarships for 2021/2022. Students are encouraged to explore these opportunities on our Department website.

The University Scholarship Committee will be reviewing applications this Fall for recipients of other scholarships as well. Current students who satisfy the requirements and qualifications are encouraged to contact the University Scholarship Office.

"Neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both" — C. Wright Mills
CRIMINAL JUSTICE INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Students who enroll in CJ 444, Internship in Criminal Justice, have the opportunity to perform as participant-observers in established criminal justice agencies at the local, state, and federal levels. Between 7 and 15 criminal justice majors enroll each semester and gain valuable experience.

The core objectives of the internship are as follows:
- To provide students with practical job experience as part of their formal degree program;
- To help students understand the realities of certain careers;
- To emphasize the importance of effective habits such as professional appearance, promptness, and dependability;
- To develop proficiency in judgment and decision-making situations, and;
- To help students understand the functions of organizations, including interaction between management, government, and the operating environment.

Currently enrolled juniors or seniors interested in a Criminal Justice internship, should contact Frank Tridico, frank.tridico@selu.edu Instructor and Coordinator of the CJ Internship Program. Students may be eligible to participate with the consent of the coordinator and the Department Head, a good GPA, and the completion of 90 or more credit hours.
YOGA, INEQUALITY, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Dr. Settembrino has been named the Woman’s Hospital Endowed Professor of the Humanities by the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. This award recognizes Dr. Settembrino as one of the College’s most outstanding faculty. The endowed professorship includes funding through the Board of Regents Support Fund (BoRSF) to support Dr. Settembrino’s research and teaching in contribution to the mission of the University.

In conjunction with this award, Dr. Settembrino is developing several projects and events intended to examine issues of social inequality and social justice through the practice and tradition of yoga. “2020 reillumination the vast inequalities that exist in our own state and around the globe,” says Dr. Settembrino, the COVID-19 Pandemic, the ongoing protests against police brutality, and multiple natural disasters underscore the ways in which capitalism, white supremacy, cis-hetero-patriarchy, and ableism actively repress our humanity.” Dr. Settembrino believes that when our humanity is repressed, we begin to accept that we are unworthy of basic dignity or human rights. Worse yet, Dr. Settembrino argues that we allow other people to suffer because we don’t recognize their humanity either “Yoga has been a powerful tool in my life and has allowed me to overcome alienation and reconnect to our shared humanity,” said Dr. Settembrino who became a certified yoga instructor in 2017. Since that time, Dr. Settembrino has incorporated aspects of yoga in his sociology classes, including practices like meditation, reflective journaling, and active listening.
"Yoga is so much more than making shapes with the body. It's a diverse philosophical tradition from South Asia that offers time-tested methods for cutting through the messiness of daily life and finding inner peace," said Dr. Settembrino.

Dr. Settembrino’s project is part of a growing movement that seeks to integrate yoga philosophy and practices with social justice activism to address social inequality. As the Woman’s Hospital Endowed Professor in the Humanities, Dr. Settembrino plans to integrate sociological inquiry and yoga teachings to engage students in understanding the social origins of inequality and exploring opportunities for creating equity on campus and in their communities.

To support this work, Dr. Settembrino is developing a new undergraduate course called Yoga, Inequality, and Social Justice which will be offered in 2022. Additionally, Dr. Settembrino is organizing a series of panel discussions and guest lectures with nationally and internationally recognized yoga teachers and practitioners engaged in social justice activism. Finally, Dr. Settembrino plans to lead a study abroad program focusing that will focus on service learning in 2023. To learn more, please contact Dr. Settembrino at Marc.Settembrino@southeastern.edu.
STUDENT AWARDS

There is no end to the excellent contributions and accomplishments made by the students in the Department of Sociology & Criminal Justice. A few students have received considerable praise this semester, however. Join us in celebrating their accomplishments. They earned it!

Sam Allen and Tori Rodriguez honored for their special service to the department by producing a sociology promotional video to recruit freshman to the major. WATCH the video here! need hyperlink to YouTube.

Rebecca Shields Marc P. Riedel Outstanding Graduating Senior in CJ

Bria Cummings F. Dale Parent Outstanding Graduating Senior in SOC
Our Department faculty fielded a team in the University's annual Phi Kappa Phi Intramural Quiz Bowl and won First Prize for the third time in four years! Playing under the team name ‘The Social Factors,’ faculty members Robert Martin, Lisa Olson, Rebecca Tuxhorn, and Jonathan Varnado went head to head against teams of faculty and students from across the University in this year's online Quiz Bowl. The team answered questions on a dizzying array of subjects, from science to the humanities to pop culture. We hope to defend the title -- and keep the championship trophy in the Department office where it is on display -- in next year's tournament.
Now the spotlight moves towards...

Lead Speaker Series

The Department organized a professional criminal justice speaker series program primarily intended for our criminal justice students. The goal of speaker series, titled, Leadership, Education and Development (LEaD) is aimed at presenting motivating, uplifting, competent and professional Southeastern alumni guest speakers. Speakers, who can educate, inspire and motivate students to strive for excellence in law enforcement, corrections, courts, private security and criminal justice support activities.

The LEaD Series puts a face on these careers and provides students with an inside glimpse into these professional areas. The SLU student now has the opportunity to discover the leadership qualities the speakers have developed and the education required as future leaders in the criminal justice profession. Tridico said, “Our speakers are the professionals who are employed in the fields the students will enter upon graduation...the students are free to ask questions and develop insight into how professional careers evolve.”

Finally, our speakers speak about their own Southeastern educational experience and professional development, how they chose criminal justice as a profession, and how they developed their particular interests and specialties. This highly successful program is entering its seventh year and is generating an average of 75 students per session.

Please join us if you want to know more about exciting and meaningful careers in criminal justice!

Social Justice Speaker Series

Due to the international COVID-19 pandemic, the Social Justice Speaker Series for the 2020-2021 academic year was put on hiatus. However, the department looks forward to reschedule the event for the 2021-2022 academic year!
As COVID-19 spread around the globe, Associate Professor of Sociology Dr. Marc Settembrino, worked to develop international research agendas to study the intersections of COVID-19, homelessness, and capitalism.

Settembrino served as the co-lead of the Homelessness, Housing Precarity & COVID-19 working group and as a member of the supported by the National Science Foundation-funded Social Science Extreme Events Research (SSEER) network and the CONVERGE facility at the Natural Hazards Center at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

“Our team brought together researchers and practitioners from around the globe to examine the challenges faced by those experiencing homelessness and housing precarity during the COVID-19 pandemic,” Settembrino said. “The pandemic and homelessness present as dual crises and many individuals and organizations are developing innovative strategies to provide services for those who are homeless.”

The Homelessness, Housing Precarity, and COVID-19 Working Group’s research agenda seeks to document and evaluate the implications of government and community-based interventions across scales and borders in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. They hope to inform emergency managers and other practitioners to cultivate an understanding of the intersections between COVID-19, housing precarity, and other hazards.
Settembrino, also served as a member of the Disaster Capitalism and COVID-19 Working Group. Research agendas can be accessed at https://converge.colorado.edu/resources/covid-19/working-groups/research-agendas.

At Southeastern, Settembrino worked with Associate Professor of Criminal Justice Dr. Lisa Olson to organize a research team of graduate students to study transnational actors’ responses to the global pandemic. Currently, they are studying how GEO Group, one of the world’s largest private prison companies, has responded to the pandemic in Australia, South Africa, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

As part of this work, on April 8, 2020, MSAS graduate students Megan Howard and Jessica Bell presented “COVID-19, Global Disaster Capitalism, and the Prison Industrial Complex: The Case of GEO Group” during a paper session on Work, Crime, and the Economy at the 2021 Meetings of the Southern Sociological Society. For more information contact Dr. Settembrino, at Marc.Settembrino@southeastern.edu.
Outside of the classroom...

STUDENT ORGANIZATION NEWS

**Alpha Kappa Delta (AKD):** Throughout the 2020–21 academic year, the Department’s chapter of the Alpha Kappa Delta (AKD) International Sociology Honor Society operated as a recognized student organization on campus. The Department has sponsored our Alpha Kappa Delta Chapter for six years. AKD initiated five new members in May 2021.

To qualify for the honor society, undergraduates must have junior or senior status, have completed four sociology courses with a GPA of at least 3.0, and maintain an overall GPA of at least 3.3. Graduate students who have completed at least one semester of coursework with a GPA of 3.0 or higher also qualify.

Welcome new members Diamond Johnson, Julesa Howard, Megan Howard, Tiffany Bel, and Jessica Bell! All five are intelligent and hardworking students who are serving as officers in our chapter. Students in AKD presented research at a the SSS conference this past spring. See the full description under "Student and Alumni News"
Students Organization News

Justice4All: Justice4All, the student club committed to learning about and participating in activities related to decreasing mass incarceration in Louisiana, became more visible on the campus when they received a donation that allowed them to purchase t-shirts with their logo on the front and their mission on the back. Members learned about how solitary confinement is being over-used -- unconstitutionally -- and how that affects the mental health of prisoners who are treated in that way. At the end of the semester, J4A sent $100 to the Louisiana Books2Prisoners program out of New Orleans to help with the cost of postage when donated books are sent to individual prisoners who have requested them.

Reconnect Spring 2021: Reconnect is a student lead organization which aims to cultivate a more environmentally sustainable culture both on and off of Southeastern’s campus through education and community building. We typically achieve these goals by holding on-campus events like our monthly Reconnect Farmer’s Market, educational workshops, and working in the campus community garden. This has been a tough year! We have had to suspend our farmers markets due to COVID-19 but we are gearing up to "reconnect" with our farmers, growers and all of our other vendors for the fall of 2021. We will also be getting "back in the garden," the campus community garden at the Sustainability Center that is. Finally, we can't wait to re-engage in doing our part on the climate crisis by hosting workshops with members of Sunrise, the youth organization fighting for just climate change policy.
Pre-Law Association: Despite the global pandemic and virtual format, the Pre-Law Students Association has managed to adapt and thrive over the past year. They have welcomed a variety of different guest speakers during this time, including 3L student Tully Moyer from NYU School of Law, criminal law professor Kelly Carmena from Southern University Law Center, and Professor Michael Garrard, also from SULC, who spoke to them about the BAR exams. They have also met with recruiters from nearby law schools, including Texas A&M’s Admissions Recruitment Coordinator Mrs. Amanda Zander, Mrs. Daphne James, the Director of Admissions for LSU, and Ms. Jordan Pittman, the Diversity and Strategic Initiatives Manager for SULC.

The organization’s objectives are to both educate students about the legal profession and to prepare them for law school. The PLSA has continued to accomplish these throughout the previous year by bringing in guest speakers such as the ones listed above, providing students with both valuable information and networking opportunities, having biweekly LSAT practice for members, and providing guidance to students throughout their pre-law journey and assistance during their transition to law school. For example, at the beginning of the semester, the organization’s president, Heaven Sutton, talked to students about her experience applying to law school, providing insight into the admissions process and giving advice on how to improve their chances of being accepted to law school and earning scholarships.
Contributing to the field...

STUDENT & ALUMNI NEWS

- Students in Southeastern’s Sociology and Criminal Justice Programs presented research at the annual meeting of the Criminology Consortium and LSU Discover Day. Research was conducted by Landon Benoit, Micah Brown, Claire LeBlanc, Kyriel Felton, Lynzeryus Railey, Emma Guillot, and Christa Brown and sponsored by Dr. William Chernoff. These collaborative works were entitled: "The Great Expectation: The Relationship Between Social Media and Body Satisfaction" and "Sociocultural Influences of Family and Peers on the Development of Body Dissatisfaction and Eating Disorder Symptomatology on Adolescent Boys and Girls". (Pictured bottom left).

- Stephanie Fernandez and faculty advisor Dr. Peter Shrock presented a poster titled "Illegal Wildlife Trade in the Amazon" at the 2021 Universities of Louisiana Academic summit. (Pictured bottom right).
The department's chapter of the Alpha Kappa Delta sociology honor society presented research titled "Food Insecurity Among Southeastern Louisiana University Students" at the annual meeting of the Southern Sociological Society. The students who worked on the project were undergrad student Michael-Anne Leachman and graduate students Sam Allen, Tiffany Bel, Jacob O'Neill, Darren Quiett, and Donovan Storr. This effort was sponsored by Dr. Robert Martin. All six of the students did some work on the AKD research project, but the students who gave the presentation at the meeting were Sam Allen, Jacob O'Neill, and Darren Quiett. (Pictured bottom left).

Megan Howard (graduate student) is currently co-authoring a book chapter along side Dr. Marc Settembrino, Dr. Lisa Olson, and Sam Allen (graduate student) on how the news media covers transgender murder victims in rural and urban Louisiana. Jessica Bell (grad student), Megan Howard, Dr. Marc Settembrino, and Dr. Lisa Olson also presented original research at Southern Sociological Society's annual meeting titled "COVID-19, Global Disaster Capitalism, and the Prison Industrial Complex: The Case of GEO Group".

Graduate students Tori Rodriguez and Molly O'Krepki along with Dr. William Chernoff, Dr. Lisa Olson, and Dr. Michael Bisciglia presented findings at the annual meeting of the Criminology Consortium. Their presentation was titled "Court Ordered Sobriety: The Juvenile Drug Court and the Effects of Threats, Sanctions, and Treatment." (Pictured bottom right).
Expanding worldviews...

STUDY ABROAD!

Due to the international COVID-19 pandemic, all study abroad programs for the 2020/2021 academic year were cancelled. However, the department looks forward to continuing both study away and study abroad programs for the 2021/2022 academic year!

Past trips explored London, Cuba, and Zion National Park!
Dr. David Burley presented a paper titled "Doing Environmental Sociology In Zion National Park" at the annual meeting of the Southwestern Social Science Association. He also presented research titled "Learning and Practicing Environmental Sociology in Zion National Park" at the Mid-South Sociology Association Annual Meeting (Virtual). Students interested in career paths should review his article "Experts Weigh In On Current Job Market Trends." on Zippia: The Career Expert (https://www.zippia.com/instructor-of-sociology-jobs/trends/).

Dr. Robert Martin presented his latest findings in a paper titled "Individual Support for Government Restriction of Religion: An International Study" at the annual meeting of the Southern Sociological Society.

At the annual conference of the Mid-South Sociological Association, Dr. Peter Shrock and Dr. Nicole Youngman presented "The Construction of COVID-19 as an Occupational Safety and Health Issue in News Media."

Dr. Shrock also spoke to members of St. Charles Avenue Baptist Church of New Orleans and for Tangipahoa Democrats and Progressives on "Race and Police Use of Force".

Dr. Marc Settembrino presented his findings titled “Fat Kid Yoga Club: Creating Space for Joyful Movement and Liberation” at the Annual Accessible Yoga Conference.


Dr. Rebecca Tuxhorn successfully defended her dissertation titled “How are Women Farmers "Doing" and "Undoing" Gender?: An Exploration of Women’s Gender Practices in Farming” and, in doing so, earned her doctorate degree. She also shared her latest findings at the Symposium on Women & Gender. Her work was titled “An Exploration of Women’s Gendered Practices in Farming". Additionally, Dr. Tuxhorn guest lectured on the topic “Exploring women’s gendered practices in farming: Working through the research process” at University of Illinois.


Grants


Settembrino, Marc. (2020). Working Group Member, “Disaster Capitalism & COVID-19. COVID-19 Working Group for Public Health and Social Sciences Research. Supported by the National Science Foundation-funded Social Science Extreme Events Research (SSEER) network and the CONVERGE facility at the Natural Hazards Center at the University of Colorado Boulder. ($1,000)
Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice
HELP US CONTINUE THE SUCCESS OF OUR STUDENTS
SUPPORT THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY & CRIMINAL JUSTICE

If you would like to make a contribution, we would greatly appreciate it! You will be recognized in our next newsletter.

To support the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice Developmental Fund, which assists with dayto-day expenses and sponsored events, please make checks payable to: Southeastern Development Foundation & Sociology & Criminal Justice and mail to: Sociology and Criminal Justice; SLU 10686; Hammond, LA 70402.

My/Our Gift is: □ $ 10 - $49 □ $ 50 – 99 □ $ 100 and above

To support the following endowed scholarships, please use the web link below to make your contribution:

The Jerry Salomone Endowed Scholarship in Sociology
The Tom Sullenberger Endowed Scholarship in Criminal Justice
The Leslie Flucke Memorial Scholarship in Applied Sociology


THANK YOU!

We want to hear from you! Please let us know how you are doing, and if you would be interested in being nominated for an alumni award from the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (see award description at: www.selu.edu/alumni_donors/alumni_assoc/recognitions/index.html)

- Name: __________________________________________________
- Address: __________________________________________________
- __________________________________________________
- Email: __________________________________________________
- Phone: __________________________________________________
- Year of Graduation and Major: _________________________________
- Additional Comments: _____________________________________