CHAIR’S CORNER

Normally, in the first newsletter of a semester, I would say “Welcome Back” to everyone. However, this is our first newsletter of Spring 2016. Instead, I will say that I hope that your semester is going well and that you are enjoying your classes.

The last five weeks have been hectic in the department. As you will read in the following pages, we are conducting two faculty searches, one for a forensic anthropologist and the other for an archaeologist. In the last week, we were successful in hiring a forensic anthropologist who will start in Fall 2016. We hope to interview candidates for the archaeology position in the next few weeks.

Spring Break is only about two-and-a-half weeks away. That means that midterm exams or projects are also almost upon us. Please remember that we have an excellent departmental tutor in Patricia Carrillo, if you need some help. Her hours are Monday through Thursday 8:00-10:30am, or you can schedule an appointment through email.

I hope that students (and faculty) pay attention to the email that Tammy sends each day concerning upcoming events on campus and/or in the community. These offer great opportunities for us to learn, to connect to others, and to share our unique perspectives about the social world.

We invite students to come by the department and hang out, so we can get to know you better. We actually had a small line this morning for free coffee!

As always, if anyone has ideas for what they want to see in the newsletter or on the departmental web site, please let Tammy or me know.

Dr. Cheryl Childers
Have you been noticing a flurry of activity around some different faces? What is it all about and who are those people getting so much attention from the Sociology/Anthropology Department faculty?

The Sociology/Anthropology Department is in the midst of two searches to fill the new Forensic Anthropology position and the Archaeology position that was vacated by Dr. Wood.

A search for the right person to offer the positions is quite an arduous one and to have two going on at the same time is quite demanding. The search for the Forensic Anthropologist position began late September 2015. After narrowing down the candidates, faculty interviewed a few candidates via Zoom (similar to Skype). The field was then narrowed down to two candidates to invite to the campus. During their time spent here at Washburn, the candidates met one-on-one with the members of the Search Committee, Dr. Childers, Dr. Stephenson (the Dean of College of Arts & Sciences), and Dr. Randy Pembrook (Vice President of Academic Affairs). The candidates provided a teaching demonstration to an Anthropology class. The candidates also gave an informal presentation on their research during a luncheon consisting of members of the Search Committee, faculty from the Sociology/Anthropology Department, and invited Forensic Anthropology and Anthropology majors. We offered the position to Dr. Alexandra Klales and she has accepted. Dr. Klales will join the Sociology/Anthropology Department August 2016.

The search for the Archaeology position began late October 2015 and is going through the same steps. When the candidates are narrowed down to two candidates to invite to Washburn, you may see them being escorted around campus or providing a teaching demonstration in one of your Anthropology courses or giving a presentation during a luncheon. When a candidate has been offered the position and accepted it, an update will be provided.
Meet Your Professor

Dr. Chris Conner earned his Ph.D. from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas in 2015 and is an Assistant Professor of Sociology. His research focuses on deviance, subcultures, popular culture, GLBT studies, and social theory. His teaching includes criminology, penology, deviance, and juvenile delinquency.

Dr. Conner’s hobbies include traveling, working out, computer games, and board games. He also enjoys spending time watching movies and TV shows and dining out.

Why did Dr. Conner chose sociology as a career path? He choose it because sociology is everywhere! He loves his job and considers sociology to be as a hobby as he does it as a career. Dr. Conner states, “My goal has always been to line everything up so it synchronizes and works well together. For example my latest project on LGBT+ culture has allowed me to merge my interests in volunteering for Pride alongside my academic work.”

Fun Fact: Dr. Conner usually carries a wad of $2 bills.

Students in the News

Alexis Winter, a B.S. in Anthropology - Forensic Anthropology concentration sophomore, presented at the 35th annual conference on the First-year Experience. Alexis presented on the topic of “Enhancing Retention through the Student Employee Experience” to a standing room only audience. Congratulations, Alexis, on your accomplishment!
Culture

Photos Courtesy of Tina Williams
Culture and Food is a new course in the department of Sociology and Anthropology. In this course, we are trying to understand a wide range of sociological topics from culture to ethnic identity to social class. One of the neatest things about this course is that students voluntarily bring and share food with classmates. So far, we had chicken gizzards, spam-kimbap, and mochi to name a few.

In the pictures, we are discussing Gastrodiplomacy, which refers to governments employing food as an important diplomatic tool. This culinary diplomacy is promoted by a simple idea that food is one of the safest ways to experience exotic and foreign cultures. Food helps build emotional connections between regular people and foreign nations. Thailand, S. Korea, Peru, and Taiwan are leading countries of food cultural diplomacy, which seeks to win “heart and minds through the stomach.”

In particular, Korea has been actively engaged in re-branding its image by using han-sik, Korean cuisine. As a hands-on activity, students are tasting kimchi, a fermented dish made of napa cabbage with varied seasonings and bibimbap, a dish that contains many ingredients mixed in a bowl with rice and hot pepper paste. To put it simply, students are experiencing “food as an entrée to understanding a foreign culture.”

On the final note, I am looking forward to the first potluck (a taste of memory) next week. Students are supposed to bring a meaningful food to themselves. This will provide a great opportunity for us to eat other people’s memories.

Dr. Sangyoub Park
UPCOMING SOCIOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY CLUB EVENTS

SO/AN Club Events

**February:**
Social Event
(more information to be announced)

**March:**
Social Event
(more information to be announced)

Pros and Cons of Guns on Campus Week
(more information to be announced)

**April:**
Social Event
(more information to be announced)

Going Green with WU
(more information to be announced)

For updates on events, either go to www.washburn.edu/anso or follow us and like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/wusoan.

SOCIOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY CLUB

The Sociology/Anthropology Club, held a meeting January 27th to game plan some more for the club’s events for the Spring 2016 semester. Besides monthly social events, the club is planning a Pros and Cons of Guns on Campus Week for late March. Plans are also in the works for tying in with Washburn’s Energy/Sustainability Program to help with Washburn’s efforts to go more green. As event plans are solidified, more information will be sent out via email and posted to both the webpage and on Facebook.

**Membership Dues Reminder:**
Membership dues for the Sociology/Anthropology Club is $5.00 per semester. Benefits of membership includes voting rights and discounts on SO/AN Club merchandise and SO/AN Club event fees.
Please Consider Giving to the Sociology/Anthropology Department at Washburn University - It’s Easy . . .

Go to www.givetowashburn.org,
Click on Ways to Give,
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See a list of all fund designations,
Select either:
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Sociology/Anthropology Department, or Sociology/Anthropology Department Scholarship Fund

OR
Mail a check to:
Washburn University Foundation
1729 SW MacVicar Avenue
Topeka, KS 66604

Be sure to note one of the areas above in the memo line on the check.

THANK YOU!