

Sociology and Anthropology

“For me, the social world is now both less of a mystery and more of a mystery at the same time. Actually, it is more shocking to me, as I easily recognize the inequalities present in our society. Especially, after courses like Media and the Public Mind and Race and Ethnic Relations, I find myself being more critical of power and dominance and more compassionate toward the unequal treatment of certain social groups.”

Alissa Benjamin '10

The department of sociology and anthropology combines two distinct yet related disciplines and offers a major and minor in sociology, an interdisciplinary major that includes coursework in both sociology and anthropology, and a minor in anthropology. In addition, faculty can provide students interested in law, criminal justice, global studies, health fields, human-social services, public policy, or urban studies, with a recommended course of study that will provide a strong pre-professional foundation.

Sociology and anthropology courses also contribute to the following interdisciplinary programs: Gender, sexuality, and women’s studies; ethnic studies; environmental studies; and a minor in civic engagement.

ANTHROPOLOGY: Thinking anthropologically allows us to explore the rich diversity in human life and encourages respect for individuals and for other cultures. Anthropology is built upon extended observation of people in the places where they reside, while participating directly in activities whenever possible.

SOCIOLOGY: Sociology encourages us to look at society with a fresh perspective, to question our taken-for-granted assumptions, to investigate people’s actions, and to explore the organization of society. Our courses provide a basis for thinking about social alternatives, imagining possibilities for social justice, and being engaged citizens.

The mission of the sociology and anthropology department is to foster a critical consciousness concerning how

different cultures and societies organize, make sense of, and change their worlds. Students are engaged in a challenging yet supportive learning environment in which they develop an awareness of their social location, respect for diverse experiences and cultures, and commitment to social justice.

BENEFITS OF ONE COURSE AT A TIME

Cornell’s One Course At A Time schedule facilitates strong learning communities and allows professors to approach material from multiple perspectives and in a variety of teaching and learning styles. Courses incorporate discussions, lectures, films, and other experiential learning activities.

Direct studies of culture are critical to the practice of anthropology, and the block plan enables field-based studies on a regular basis. For example, students conduct daily archaeological fieldwork with State Archaeologist John Doershuk at a local site during Archaeological Field Methods. Professor Misha Quill, who joined the faculty in 2015, leads her Applied Anthropology course in the Bahamas and is developing additional courses abroad.

Understanding social change is critical to the practice of sociology, and two courses spend 1-2 weeks at the McLennan Center in Chicago to learn directly from community leaders and organizers working on issues of poverty, violence, public health, education, housing, and community development. Professor Erin Davis also regularly leads a block-long course in Japan that focuses on Japanese culture, human rights, and public policy issues.

Other courses extend the classroom learning experience with shorter field

Faculty Bios & Courses

TORI BARNES-BRUS *Associate Professor of Sociology*

Teaches courses on inequality, deviance and social control, reproduction, media, and research methods. Her courses demonstrate a dedication to social justice and civic engagement, and many involve field trips or incorporate public sociology projects. She has sponsored numerous student research projects, and her own current research uses the Lydia E. Pinkham Company as a case study for analyzing the cultural construction and commercialization of womanhood, reproduction, and women’s health. Ph.D. in sociology, University of Kansas

ERIN DAVIS *Associate Professor of Sociology*

Explores cultural diversity and social inequalities, focusing on gender, sexualities, bodies, and identities in both her courses and her research. Many courses include guest speakers, involve field trips or off-campus travel, and/or incorporate public sociology projects. Professor Davis also works closely with students on their research, and has sponsored student presentations at the Iowa Sociological Association meetings and the Midwest Sociological Society meeting. Ph.D. in sociology, University of Virginia

trips to sites such as a local community-supported farm, nearby emergency shelters and women's centers, and the Body Worlds exhibit at the Minneapolis Museum of Science.

We also bring experts into the classroom. Guests have included Breanne Fahs, professor of women and gender studies at Arizona State University, who specializes in women's sexuality and political activism; Robin Marty, author and reproductive justice activist; Dolores Huerta, grassroots labor and civil rights activist; Ami Mattison, spoken word poet-performing artist; Zach Kelin, lawyer who has worked for the Navajo Nation; and Suparna Bhaskaran, health care policy analyst.

STUDENT RESEARCH

In a range of courses, including research methods, and through independent studies and work with faculty members, students develop individual research projects and regularly present their research at the Cornell College Student Symposium, the Iowa Sociological Association Annual Meeting, and the Midwest Sociological Society Annual Meeting. In addition to presenting their research, several students have applied for and received awards at both of these annual professional meetings.

INTERNSHIPS/FELLOWSHIPS

Students have recently completed internships or fellowships at:

- Jeremiah Project in Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Overseas Migration Museum in Kobe, Japan
- Catherine McAuley Center in Cedar Rapids, Iowa
- Linn County Department of Public Health in Cedar Rapids, Iowa
- Covenant House of Texas in Houston, Texas
- Willis Dady Homeless Shelter in Cedar Rapids, Iowa
- Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission in Cedar Rapids, Iowa
- Tubman Family Crisis and Support Services in Minneapolis, Minnesota

AFTER CORNELL

ALUMNI CAREERS

Skills trainer at Opportunity Homes Inc, Decorah, Iowa (Class of 2015)

Project manager at Meta-Culture, Bengaluru, India (Class of 2015)

Support services coordinator at Catherine McAuley Center, Cedar Rapids, Iowa (Class of 2014)

Administrative assistant at The Trust for Public Land, St. Paul, Minnesota (Class of 2014)

AmeriCorps VISTA at Shelter House Fairweather Lodge, Iowa City, Iowa (Class of 2013)

Office manager at National Autistic Society Scotland, Glasgow, Scotland (Class of 2013)

Behavioral aide II at Fraser, St. Paul, Minnesota (Class of 2013)

City of Austin ambassador, Austin, Texas (Class of 2013)

Sexual assault advocate at Riverview Center, Cedar Rapids, Iowa (Class of 2012)

Fulbright English Teaching Assistant at Université Chouaib Doukkali, El Jadida, Morocco (Class of 2012)

Treatment counselor at Tanager Place, Morton, Washington (Class of 2012)

Social worker at Jewish Child and Family Service, Chicago, Illinois (Class of 2011)

Intern adoption specialist at The Adoption Exchange, Aurora, Colorado (Class of 2011)

Living wage program administrator at City of St. Louis, St. Louis, Missouri (Class of 2011)

Health literacy program coordinator at Children's Medical Center, Dallas, Texas (Class of 2011)

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Master of Social Science in social work, University College Dublin (Class of 2013)

M.A. in anthropology, University of South Carolina (Class of 2013)

M.A. in conflict resolution, University of Denver (Class of 2013)

M.S. in higher education and student affairs, Indiana University Bloomington (Class of 2012)

Ph.D. in sociology, University of Iowa (Class of 2011)

M.S. in inclusive education, Syracuse University (Class of 2011)

Master of Social Work, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Class of 2011)

Master of Social Work in children & youth, University of Denver (Class of 2011)

Ph.D. in sociology, University of Cincinnati (Class of 2011)

M.A. in applied sociology, University of Massachusetts Boston (Class of 2011)

Master of Public Administration, University of Kansas (Class of 2011)

J.D., Saint Louis University (Class of 2011)

Master of Public Affairs, University of Missouri-Columbia (Class of 2011)

M.A. in anthropology, University of Illinois at Chicago (Class of 2011)

MARY B. OLSON

Professor of Sociology

Teaches courses in sociology that address social inequality and social change, including American Indians: Culture, Activism, and Social Justice; Race and Ethnic Relations; The African American Civil Rights Movement Through Film; and Religion, Spirituality, and Community. Her research focuses on fishing rights in the Pacific Northwest. Ph.D. in sociology, University of Wisconsin

MISHA QUILL

Assistant Professor of Anthropology

Teaches courses in justice, gender, human rights, medical anthropology, religious practice, and research methods. Her courses, which focus on the social world, often include trips off campus as well as guest speakers. Professor Quill is planning off-campus opportunities for students in India, Cuba, Ireland, Mexico, and the Bahamas. Ph.D. in cultural anthropology, University of Iowa