The Department is in the process of searching for a new chair. Three candidates are scheduled for interviews in February and March 2011, with the goal of having the new chair in place in time for Fall semester. David Wiley is currently serving as interim chair.

The new chair will succeed Jan Bokemeier, who has served from 2003 to 2010. During her term the Department was rejuvenated adding 17 new faculty through external searches and three professors through internal transfers. The Department is now more diverse and has partnerships with Chicano-Latino Studies, Global Urban Studies Program, African Studies Center, Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, the Center for Advanced Studies of International Development, the Gender Center, Kellogg Biological Station, Lyman Briggs College, Julian Samora Research Institute, and Environmental Studies and Policy Program. The Department also established a large on-line undergraduate curriculum and a new graduate specialization in animal studies. She thanks Steve Gold and Toby Ten Eyck for their dedicated leadership and service as Associate Chairs while she was chair.

Dr. Bokemeier will be continuing her research on family and social factors that shape economic decisions. In two years she will retire to focus on the sociology of grandparenting and travel.

Dr. Bokemeier joined the MSU faculty as a professor of sociology in 1990 after serving as chair of Sociology at the University of Kentucky. She received a College of Social Science Faculty Initiative Award in 1995 and 1996 and an MSU Distinguished Faculty Award in 1996. She served as chair of Sociology at MSU from 2003-2010. Nationally, Dr. Bokemeier was President of the Rural Sociological Society, a member of the National Agricultural Biotechnology Council and a charter member of the Council of Contemporary Families. She is a member of Gamma Sigma Delta, the National Agriculture Honorary Society and Alpha Kappa Delta, the International Sociology Honor Society. She has advised the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, USDA’s Experiment Station Committee on Policy, and Extension Committees on Policy and on Science and Technology.

David Wiley is currently serving as Interim Chair of the Department during our national search for a new chairperson. Recently, he returned to Sociology after 30 years of directing the MSU African Studies Center, which features the largest faculty (160) and has produced more PhD dissertations on Africa in the past 20 years than any other university. In 2010 Dr. Wiley was co-editor of and wrote two chapters in International and Language Education for a Global Future: Fifty Years of the U.S. Title VI and Fulbright-Hays Programs. He is continuing his research on African environment and development in South Africa and a new focus on the militarization in Africa.

This reception brings together alumni, faculty, and students to reconnect, share experiences, and meet our new chair. Please join us!
Brendan Mullen returned from Dubai in 2010 where he served as Executive Director of the MISTI satellite campus there. He will continue his work with Sophia Kousoufopoules and Ray Garcia on the study abroad summer program in Greece which is entering its tenth year. Dr. Mullen was elected a council member of the newly formed ASA Section on Sociology of Development.

Craig Harris was interviewed on MSNBC on the Food and Drug Administration Food Safety Modernization Act just before it was passed by the US Senate. He stated that as our food system becomes more industrialized and the companies have become much larger in scale, a food contamination can affect people in more than half the country.

Sema Chandhavut was interviewed on the Voice of America Bangla on the political rise of Clarkson D (DCI) who in January 2011 became the first US Congressman of Bangladeshi descent. She also talked about the history of the Bangladeshis in US and their challenges in the face of the war on terror and the Ground Zero controversy.

Ralph E. Pyle is co-author with James D. Davidson of “Near the Frontline: The political rise of Hanson Clarke (D MI) who in Jan 2011 became the majority leader of the chamber. Soma Chaudhuri was appointed to the ASA Committee on the Societies in the face of the war on terror and the Ground Zero controversy.

Dr. Johnson was appointed to the ASA Committee on the Societies in the face of the war on terror and the Ground Zero controversy.

Zachary Neal published an article in Social Science Research. "Non-standard work schedules, work–family conflict and parental well-being: A comparison of married and cohabiting unions" that was published in Social Science Research.


Ragni Bundesmann earned a MSU Environmental Faculty Fellow for the 2010-11. The fellowship brings six relatively new MSU faculty members together to work on this year’s theme of climate change and coupled natural and social systems.

Stefan Kropfwein published in two grants from the National Institutes of Health. He was a two-year post-doctoral fellow in the Division of Public and Human Nutrition. "Improving feeding practices for child diet and weight in low income families" with Sharon Hoerr of the Department of Food Science & Human Nutrition.

Tom Connor will be working with Last Post (PhD, 1999) on an NIH/ NIBRS project. "To improve health outcomes for elderly patients presenting to emergency departments by developing, validating, and testing health information technology (HIT) diagnostic tools.

Geoffrey Habron and Laura Thorpe, coordinator for the Residential Initiative on the study of the environment, received a grant from the US Department of Education entitled "Competency-based Assessment of Liberal Learning Through Outdoors: Institutional Experimental Educational for Global Sustainability." The Center for the Study of Standards in Society, formerly the Institute for Food and Agricultural Standards under the leadership of Drs. Lawrence Buch and John Stone, has received two grants. The first will look at "The Agro-Environmental Justice Initiative at MSU." The second is for a workshop on Nano-Biosensors in the Agrifood Sector funded by National Science Foundation.

Graduate Students Lauren Hillkirr and Cristian Dona-Reveco won the Research Excellence Award-2009-10 went to Aaron Mc翠ght and the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award to Clifford Benson.

Tom Dietz was co-editor of Human Footprints on the Global Environment: Threats to Sustainability for the 2009 Gerald L. Young distinguished scholar book award from the Society for Human Ecology.

Linda Gjokai, Naomi Glogower, and Cameron Whitley all won the 2008 Choice Award for Outstanding Academic Title.

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