Something About Us

The teaching and research interests of faculty members in the Department of Sociology includes diverse areas such as immigration, crime and criminal justice, gender, inequality, religion, and others. To help you get more acquainted with our faculty, each member of the department has provided a brief biographical sketch. Our faculty would be happy to discuss with you the many careers open to sociology graduates. The bulletin board on the second floor of Fernald Hall often has announcements of job opportunities and graduate school information.

Steven Barkan, Professor

B.A. (1973) Trinity College, Connecticut
M.A. (1976) State University of New York at Stony Brook
Ph.D. (1980) State University of New York at Stony Brook

Steve’s areas of interest in teaching and research are: criminology; deviant behavior; law and society; collective behavior and social movements; and research methods. Among other topics, his research has concerned: (1) racial prejudice and public opinion about crime and criminal justice; (2) the determinants of commitment, participation, and success in and by social movements; (3) religiosity and adults’ well-being; (4) differences in state suicide rates; and (5) gender, race, and obesity stigma. He has published more than 35 journal articles, book chapters, and textbooks in his areas of interest. He is a past president of the Society for the Study of Social Problems and president-elect of the Text and Academic Authors Association.

Amy Blackstone, Professor

B.A. (1994) Luther College
Ph.D. (2003) University of Minnesota

Amy’s teaching and research interests include the sociology of gender, work, and families. A primary focus of her work is the study of workplace harassment. She has served as a consultant on workplace sexual harassment cases, and her research on this topic has been cited in a variety of venues including Maine Public Radio, Marie Claire magazine, MSNBC, and Fox News. In her latest research, a study of voluntarily childless adults, she seeks to make sense of the choices and experiences of adults without children in relation to community wellbeing, workplace and gender equality, and what it means to be “a family.” Amy has shared her research on the childfree with the Katie Couric show, Dame magazine, TODAY, and many other media outlets.
Kyriacos Markides, Professor  
B.S. (1964) Youngstown University (Business Administration)  
M.A. (1966) Bowling Green State University  

Kyriacos' areas of interest in teaching and research are: sociology of religion; sociology of mental illness; sociology of violence and international terrorism; and sociological theory. Kyriacos' research over the last thirty five years has ranged between projects related to political sociology, nationalist movements, and the sociology of religion, non-medical healing, and shamanism. His many books in these areas have been published in twelve foreign languages. Professor Markides has lectured widely in the US, Canada and overseas and represented Cyprus in Budapest for the European Literature Award, 2011. He was the 2002 recipient of the Best Professor Award of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at University of Maine as well as the recipient of the University of Maine 2006 Presidential Research and Creative Achievement Award.

Karyn Sporer, Assistant Professor  
B.A. (2005) St. Michael's College  
M.S. (2008) Northeastern University  
Ph.D. (2016) University of Nebraska, Omaha

Karyn’s main research interests are in the areas of family violence and victimization, mental illness and violence, and violent extremism and terrorism. An advocate for persons with mental illness and their loved ones, Karyn has dedicated her research agenda and professional service to addressing social issues associated with mental illness and the mental health system. She received her BA from Saint Michael’s College (Vermont), her MS in criminal justice from Northeastern University, and her PhD in criminology and criminal justice at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Her work has been published in the Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency and the Journal of Interpersonal Violence. A passionate New England sports fan, Karyn is excited to have returned to the northeast and continue her career with students and faculty at the University of Maine.

We also have some wonderful adjunct faculty:

Patrick Downey, Adjunct Lecturer  
Glenn Eichel, Adjunct Lecturer  
Edith Elwood, Adjunct Professor  
Mary Okin, Adjunct Lecturer

Contact: Laurie Cartier, Administrative Specialist  
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