Now that midterms are rapidly approaching it is time to think about next semester’s schedule. You will be receiving a letter about pre-registration advisement from Dr. Waegel or me shortly. Advisement is more than simply acquiring your PIN. This is an opportunity to discuss your academic future with your advisor. Thinking beyond next semester allows you to plan accordingly so you can take advantage of as many educational opportunities as possible. These include internships, presenting your research at student conferences and study abroad. Note to seniors: It is not too late for these opportunities.

Another very important reason to meet with your advisor is to guarantee that you have accurate information on requirements and the availability of future courses. Far too often, I encounter students who are operating under incorrect information they have obtained from the “grapevine.” Another problem is that some students hold off on required classes hoping to get a better time (or professor) the following semester when the course may not be offered.

One of the biggest sources of confusion is the Senior Seminar. Soc 6500 fulfills the second Theory or Methods requirement for sociology majors. Students must still take a straight theory course (5000, 5050 or 5100). SOC 6500 does not fulfill the second methods requirement for criminal justice.

My best advice is to take courses that will help you “down the road.” Entertaining courses may be fun today, but what will you take from them to the “work world” or graduate school?

- Dr. Tom Arvanites
2005 Awards and Scholars

Congratulations to Diane Coffey (’06 Sociology and Honors Major; Minors in French and Spanish; Peace and Justice Concentration), one of 75 undergraduate students to receive the Harry S. Truman Scholarship for 2005.

Diane is a Villanova University Presidential Scholar, who recently returned from her time in India on a Connelly Delouvrier Scholarship.

The Truman Scholarship recognizes students who are going to become “agents of change.” In her scholarship application, Diane proposed a restructuring of the poorest nations. Upon graduation from Villanova, Diane will pursue a graduate program in Development Studies.

Congratulations, also, to our 2005 award winners which were announced at commencement. Bethany L. Deal received the John E. Hughs Award; Caroline E. Dobrynksi received the Edwin Sutherland Criminal Justice Award; Kate R. Cecich received the Lawrence J. McGarry Award; Stephanie E. Doyle received the Dean’s Award for Excellence; and Bethany L. Deal, Stephanie E. Doyle, Audrey A. Gillian, & Kathleen L. Krackenberger received the Phi Beta Kappa Award.

Featured Professor—Dr. Brian Jones

By: Jen Troutman

Although he has been at Villanova University for 30 years, Dr. Jones did not always know he wanted to become a professor. At your age, he was quite confused. Dr. Jones vacillated between law, city planning, and professing for a while after earning his B.A. in sociology from the University of Pennsylvania. It wasn’t until he finally sat down and asked those people what they actually do at work that he decided professing was for him. He then went on to get his Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Pennsylvania.

Growing up, Dr. Jones looked to his mother as a role model. “She was an organized, intense, even driven person who still managed to be down-to-earth. That is still my ideal.”

Currently, Dr. Jones is finishing up a book on social capital which lays out how Americans pattern their commitments to family, work, groups, and social networks. He is also secretly working on a science fiction novel (don’t tell anybody.) He sees writing a book as his greatest accomplishment.

Dr. Jones admits, “I still feel childish glee when I read my name on the side.”

When he’s not teaching, researching, or writing books, you can find Dr. Jones acting out adolescent athletic fantasies through powerlifting, marathoning and karate. He even completed the Philadelphia Marathon last year with his daughter, Megan.

When asked what advice he can offer students, Dr. Jones advises you to “major in something you love, then worry about a job!”
In Case You Missed It...
Adapted From The Philadelphia Inquirer—8-31-05

It’s no secret to sociologists that the gap between the richest and poorest people keeps increasing each year. This is a truly global problem. Did you know that the Philadelphia area is a prime example of this unsettling phenomenon?

According to the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, in 2004 Philadelphia County ranked fifth poorest in a ranking of 236 counties with 250,000 or more people, while Bucks and Chester counties ranked seventh on the list of the least poor.

In 2004, about 35 percent of Philadelphia children were living in poverty, up from 28 percent in 2003. Bucks county reported the nation’s third-lowest percentage of children in poverty, at 2.8 percent!

While Philadelphia’s median household income fell ten percent to $30,631 in 2004, Chester County climbed in national income rankings to number 12, at $72,288! The median income state average in PA during that time was $42,941, ranking it 25th.

New Five-Year Masters Degree Option
By: Jen Troutman

As you may have heard, the Sociology department is going to be offering a Master of Arts Degree in Criminal Justice beginning in Fall 2006. In addition to this great new program, current undergraduate criminal justice majors would have the opportunity to take advantage of a 30-credit five-year Criminal Justice Bachelor-Master’s degree program (BA/MA). Applicants are anticipated to be accepted as early as Spring 2006 to begin formal course work in Fall 2006! (That means that this year’s juniors would be able to apply!)

To accomplish a Criminal Justice Master’s Degree in five years, accepted students would be required to take classes through the summer prior to their last year at VU. In addition, three classes taken during the student would count toward their bachelor’s and master’s degrees. Grades in each of these three courses must be a “B” or higher.

Finally and most notably, once a student is admitted into the BA/MA program after receiving a bachelor’s degree, the final nine graduate credits in the BA/MA program are covered by a tuition remission granted through the Graduate Studies Office. What a great deal! It should also be noted that students accepted into this program are expected to maintain at least a 3.0 GPA in their graduate courses.

If you have questions about the BA/MA program or simply would like more detailed information on this exciting new opportunity, please contact Dr. William Waege, Criminal Justice program director, or visit the sociology website listed on the back of this newsletter and click on “MA in Criminal Justice.”

More than 60 million women are “missing” from the world as a result of sex-selective abortions and female infanticide.

- Amnesty International

African Americans were 2.2 times more likely than whites to be denied when applying for a conventional loan in 2003, the same as in 1993, and an increase from 1998 when African Americans were 1.8 times more likely than whites to be denied.

- ACORN

By the age of 65, the cumulative amount of time most Americans will have spent watching TV equals nine years.

- Worldwatch Institute
Sociological Imagination and the New Economic World
Dr. Satya Pattnayak

The US-European centered world of today is expected to change radically and beyond recognition in the next three to four decades. For example, economic intelligence units of major US investment firms predict China to overtake the United States in the year 2039 to become the biggest economy in the world in absolute dollar terms. In 2032, India will overtake Japan (currently the second biggest after the US) to become the 3rd biggest economy.

In the absence of catastrophic natural disasters, nuclear wars, and/or extra-terrestrial invasions, in the year 2050 (only 45 years from now) the ten biggest economies in the world will be in the following order (with total Gross Domestic Product in 2003 dollars in parentheses): China (45 trillion), United States (35 trillion), India (28 trillion), Japan (7 trillion), Brazil (6 trillion), Russia (5.5 trillion), United Kingdom (4.5 trillion), Germany (4.4 trillion), France (4 trillion), and Italy (2.5 trillion). Other economies will be way behind. The combined economic strength of the US and the top three European economies will be about 50 trillion dollars compared to the combined strength of China and India to the amount of 63 trillion dollars.

The changing balance of economic power will have major implications for sociological theory. Think about, for example, Weber's ideas about the "Protestant Ethic..." and Marx's ideas about "savage societies..." in the East. This is not a theoretical exercise. Think about your life. In 2032 you will be in your 50's, your peak earning years, and your children will be in college. You will have to reckon with this new world. Buckle up and think about the world you will have to deal with in which the US will no longer be the only dominant player. Instead of London and Paris, it will be Beijing and New Delhi. It is time for you all to think in terms of this world to come and get ready. What a world that will be!

What’s Next? (Continued)
from p. 1

American University, Boston College, Harvard (two students), Penn State, Vanderbilt and Yale on Graduate Assistantships. These assistantships normally carry tuition waivers and pay $12,000 to $15,000 a year for 20 hours of work per week. Students work with professors on their research and/or their teaching duties. Three courses per semester is the normal fulltime load and students are frequently on a first name basis with the faculty.

Applying to graduate school is basically the same as undergraduate school: you need to research possible schools on the web, take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), gather letters (usually 3) from your professors and file applications in December and early January. If you would like to learn more, feel free to discuss graduate school with any of your professors.