

MONTANA BOARD OF REGENTS
NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Institution: The University of Montana, Missoula
Program Title: Sociology with an Option in Inequality and Social Justice

1. How does this program advance the campus' academic mission and fit priorities?

The Inequality and Social Justice Option in Sociology will provide greater coherence and applicability to the Sociology curriculum. The curriculum will serve to educate and train students to be informed, ethical, and engaged citizens when responding to the varied social problems related to social inequality -- problems that confront the nation, the State of Montana, and our local communities.

2. How does this program fit the Board of Regents' goals and objectives?

The Inequality and Social Justice Option in Sociology will to provide students with a quality liberal arts education that provides insight and understanding to problems associated with social inequality -- inequalities based on social class, gender, race/ethnicity, disabilities, age, and sexual orientation.

3. How does this program support or advance Montana's needs and interests?

The Inequality and Social Justice Option in Sociology will benefit the State of Montana by providing educated citizens to deal with problems of low wages, impoverished communities, and growing hunger. Although there are signs that the Montana economy is improving, the consequences of poverty are readily apparent, including alcohol and drug abuse, hunger, violence, crime, and suicide. Students who graduate with this undergraduate or graduate option will be more informed as to the causes and consequences of inequality and therefore will be in a better position to contribute to efforts to effect positive social change.

4. How will this program contribute to economic development in Montana? (Note projected annual economic impact both regionally and statewide.)

The new option does not contend to provide direct economic development to Montana. Our purpose is primarily educational: to increase knowledge and understanding of inequality and social justice. Interns may be involved with agencies that seek to promote social justice. Graduates of the program will gain employment in occupations related to law, public policy, human relations, and social service, and some graduates will work in agencies that seek to promote positive social change.

5. What is the program's planned capacity?

• Break-even point?	NA	FTE students
• Enrollments / year?	NA	
• Graduates / year?	NA	
• MT jobs / year?	NA	

6. Resource Allocation:

• Total program budget?	\$ no additional budget needed
• Faculty FTE?	no additional faculty needed
• Staff FTE?	no additional staff needed

7. Does this program require new resources? Yes No

If yes, what is the amount? \$ _____

8. How will the campus fund the program?

NA

9. If internal reallocation is necessary, name the sources.

NA

Proposal

OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS

The faculty in the Department of Sociology proposes the creation of a new option in the Sociology undergraduate major and masters program. Experience has shown that offering a more tightly organized degree program, while maintaining the general sociological approach, is beneficial for students, the university, and the community. The Department of Sociology at The University of Montana (UM) has two options in existence: Criminology and Rural and Environmental Change (REaCH). This proposal would add a third: Inequality and Social Justice (ISJ).

1. Goals and objectives

This option would call on students and faculty to examine the causes and consequences of inequalities based on social class, gender, race/ethnicity, disabilities, age, and sexual orientation. Attention will be given to local, national, and global sites of inequality, including labor markets, financial institutions, education, health, religion, and family. Students enrolled in the option would investigate the political, legal, and social processes that contribute to or reduce inequality, including efforts for change.

Inequality is at the core of most sociological inquiries; people are not the same, and it is that diversity that makes for interesting sociology. In her 2002 Presidential Address to the American Sociological Association, Professor Barbara F. Reskin challenged sociologists to focus on investigating the mechanisms that produce and ameliorate the disparities across ascriptively defined groups.

2. Need for option

The most important advantage of the option will be for our students, who will benefit from the focused approach and program coherence. We will be able to identify internships, scholarships, awards, and exchange opportunities for which these students will be particularly qualified. The students will be able to offer their transcripts as an indicator of the depth of their expertise in the area of social inequality and social justice, an invaluable tool for occupations in law, public policy, human relations, social service, community-based organizations, and other governmental and non-governmental organizations. Should they wish to pursue a Ph.D. in the area of inequality and social justice, they will stand out as uniquely prepared. Several students have expressed interest in the option, including current and prospective graduate students.

The option will be a benefit for the state of Montana, as we struggle with low wages, impoverished communities, and growing hunger. Although there are signs that the Montana economy is improving, with an attendant increase in some incomes, too many children and adults still live in grinding poverty and suffer the consequences of that poverty, which include alcohol and drug abuse, hunger, violence, crime, and suicide. Students who graduate with this undergraduate or graduate option will be more informed as to the causes and consequences of inequality, and therefore will be in a better position to contribute to efforts to effect positive social change.

The option will be a benefit to UM; by identifying a central area of inquiry, we can anticipate further faculty development and collaboration both within the department and the university, and externally with other educational institutions in the United States and abroad. Several universities have such an option in inequality for both undergraduate and graduate education, notably Cornell, Princeton, Stanford, the University of Nebraska, Florida State, Iowa State, North Carolina State, and the University of Southern California. UM will be in-line with these prestigious institutions by offering this area of specialization. We will enhance the university's ability to obtain research grants because the option will highlight our expertise in social inequality and the quality of our student researchers. In addition, the Sociology Department will gain by attracting more students to its graduate program.

3. Course of study

In addition to the courses required of all sociology majors, the undergraduate ISJ option would include the following curriculum, for a minimum of 39 sociology credits. The graduate curriculum would create two new requirements, in addition to existing MA requirements. New courses are noted in italics.

Proposed Undergraduate Curriculum

Required Courses

<u>Course #</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Semester Offered</u>
Soc 220S	Race, Gender and Class	Fall
<i>Soc 441w</i>	<i>Capstone: Inequality and Social Justice</i>	Fall or Spring

Three of the following courses as ISJ option electives:

<u>Course #</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Semester Offered</u>
Soc 275S	Gender and Society	Fall
Soc 322	Sociology of Poverty	Fall or Spring
Soc 325	Social Stratification	Alternate years
Soc 370S	Social Change & Global Development	Alternate years
<i>Soc 444</i>	<i>Issues in Inequality</i>	Alternate years
Soc 435	Sociology of Law	Alternate years
Soc 485	Political Sociology	Spring

Recommended

Soc 490, Sociology Internship concurrent with Soc 441w (Capstone: Inequality and Social Justice)

In addition, students are recommended to take inter-departmental courses from an approved list, attached to this proposal as Appendix A.

Proposed Graduate Curriculum

<u>Course #</u>	<u>Course Title</u>
Soc 520	Contemporary Theory
Soc 561	Qualitative Methods
Soc 562	Quantitative Methods

Soc 545 Seminar in Inequality and Social Justice

Three credits in any 500 level course approved by ISJ committee (need not be in Sociology)

4. New Courses**Soc 441w Capstone in Inequality and Social Justice**

A capstone course for the Inequality and Social Justice concentration, it has an emphasis on writing for the discipline. Students bring together readings from other inequality content courses and/or independent readings, research methods training, and data and/or internship experience to write a final research paper on a topic of their choice within the ISJ area. Readings include pedagogical material on writing for sociology as well as background articles and books related to paper topics. Students are required to produce a final paper formatted for publication in a sociology journal, for a presentation at a social science meeting, or as an honors thesis.

Sociology 444 Issues in Inequality

The course, Issues in Inequality is an analysis of selected topics in inequality and social justice. Possible topics include Native Americans, disabilities, age, sexual orientation, and gender. [This course would allow faculty to offer occasional courses that would count toward the completion of the option. Courses would be approved by the ISJ committee and consent of the Chair of the Department of Sociology.]

Soc 545 Seminar in Inequality and Social Justice

Advanced study of various topics in inequality and social justice. This will be a small group setting that maximizes opportunities for graduate student research, discussion, and writing.

ADEQUACY, ACCREDITATION AND ASSESSMENT ISSUES**1. Adequacy**

Current faculty, facilities, equipment, and library resources are adequate for this option. The assessment component in the capstone course would move toward compliance with accreditation standards. This option will draw from the current strengths of the faculty of the Department of Sociology, in particular Celia Winkler, Kathy Kuipers, Sergio Romero and Paul Miller (as emeritus), and Nancy Arnold from the Institute for Rural Research on Disabilities, who have expertise in gender, race, class, and disability, political sociology, sociology of law, social policy, social psychology (status and power) and organizational behavior.

This proposal recommends the creation of (at most) three courses. One of these courses comprises part of Kathy Kuipers' professional development course "Capstone in Inequality and Social Justice."

The second new course is an issues course on social inequality. This will allow faculty both within sociology and in other departments (upon approval of the Chair and the Social Inequality Committee) to teach the occasional topics course. For example, we anticipate that Nancy Arnold (Rural Institute for Disabilities) and Tom Seekins (Department of Psychology) will be interested in teaching a course focusing on disabilities. The course description is under development.

The third course is a graduate seminar in inequality with topics such as rural poverty, with the focus on research and social action. Responsibility for the course will rotate among committee members.

2. Assessment plan

The course, "Capstone in Inequality and Social Justice," is the capstone experience. We will recommend that students enroll concurrently in an internship or field studies experience. One member of the Inequality and Social Justice Committee will supervise the internship/field studies as an overload until such time as enrollment justifies counting the course as part of the instructor's regular instructional load. The internship is intended to serve as research experience, and the placement will be with a community or state governmental or non-governmental organization. It is for this reason that the existing internship structure is not suited for this option. Even if students are not participating in a research internship, they will still benefit from "Capstone in Inequality and Social Justice." The course will satisfy the student's upper division writing requirement for the Department of Sociology. The professor of the capstone course will be able to assess student learning gained through the required curriculum in the ISJ option. In addition, we will keep track of graduates, both B.A.s and M.A.s, to assess longer-range outcomes, and periodically survey them regarding the usefulness of the option.

IMPACT ON FACULTY, FACILITIES, COSTS, STUDENTS AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS AND CAMPUSES

1. Faculty

No additional faculty is currently required.

2. Facilities

No additional facilities are currently required.

3. Costs

Library material acquisitions yearly budget at approximately \$3,000 proposed to the Mansfield Library Committee.

4. Impact on enrollment

The enrollment impact is difficult to gauge at this time. With approximately 335 total Sociology majors, the Criminology option currently enrolls 183 undergraduates and four graduate students, while the Rural and Environmental Change option enrolls 26 undergraduates and seven graduate students. It is anticipated that the ISJ option will draw numbers comparable to or exceeding Rural and Environmental Change. The option may result in an increase in students declaring Sociology as a major; however most of the option students likely will be drawn from the general sociology major, with some Criminology and REaCh students declaring a second option.

The ISJ option does have the possibility of drawing more students from under-represented populations such as Native Americans because the option directly addresses the nature of their under-representation. We will make special outreach efforts to organizations and

associations on- and off-campus who would have contact with potential students.

It is anticipated that these classes will exceed the minimums. The entry course, "Race, Gender, and Class" (Soc 220) easily exceeded the enrollment cap of 45 students in Spring 2005 and 2006, and in Fall 2004. The proposed content courses Sociology of Poverty, Social Stratification, and Gender and Society each had enrollments close to or exceeding 40 students at the end of the semester.

5. Relationship to other programs on campus

No other program at UM targets inequality and social justice.

6. Relationship to other institutions

Although it is common for Sociology Departments to offer some of the courses we include in our option, there are no other similar programs in the Montana University System.

There are no similar programs in our region.

The following universities have an option or program in inequality:

Washington State University has eight option areas, but none in inequality.

California State University, Fullerton, Department of Sociology, concentration in the Sociology of Class, Race, and Gender

Florida State University, Department of Sociology, "Inequality and Social Justice"

North Carolina State University, doctoral specialty in "Inequality: Class, Race, and Gender"

Oklahoma State University, Sociology, doctoral emphasis in social inequality

University of Calgary, Sociology, "Structured Inequality"

University-based Centers (many offer courses of study):

Brandeis University, Center on Hunger and Poverty

Cornell University, Center for the Study of Inequality

Harvard University, Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality and Social Policy

Northwestern University/University of Chicago, Joint Center for Poverty Research

Princeton University, The Global Network on Inequality

Rutgers University, Center for Urban Policy Research

University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland Population Research Center

University of Michigan, Ford School of Public Policy, Michigan Program on Poverty and Social Welfare Policy

University of Minnesota, Institute on Race and Poverty

University of Texas, Inequality Project

University of Wisconsin, Madison, Institute for Research on Poverty

Community-based Organizations

The following organizations are highlighted as sites for internships and research projects:

Catholic Charities

Community Hospital

Garden City Harvest

Lutheran Social Services

Missoula Aging Services
Missoula Housing Authority
Montana Food Bank Network
Montana Association for Rehabilitation
Montana Peoples' Action/Montana Indian Action
Montana Advocacy Program
MontPIRG
Northside Neighborhood Association
O'Connor Center for the Rocky Mountain West
Opportunity Resources
Partnership for Health
People First
Poverello Center
Rural Institute on Disabilities
Salvation Army
St. Patrick's Hospital
Summit Independent Living Center
Women's Opportunity Resource Development (WORD)
Working for Equality and Economic Liberation (WEEL)
YWCA

Appendix A

Extra-departmental elective courses:

This list is not exclusive; students are encouraged to take inter-departmental courses with the consent of the Inequality and Social Justice Committee.

African-American Studies

- 278H African American Institutions and Perspectives
- 368E Gandhi and King: Ethics of Nonviolence
- 379H African American History Since 1865
- 478 Martin, Malcolm and the Civil Rights Movement

Anthropology

- 102S Race and Minorities
- 231 Indigenous World View Perspectives
- 323H Native Peoples of Montana
- 324H Indians of Montana since the Reservation Era
- 328S Culture and Identity

Communications

- 412S Communication and Conflict
- 441 Persuasive Communication Campaigns
- 451 Intercultural Communication
- 480 The Rhetorical Construction of "Woman"

Economics

- 100 Introduction to Political Economy
- 111 Introduction to Microeconomics
- 323 Labor Economics
- 350 Economic Development
- 440 Environmental Economics

Geography

- 434 Food and Famine

History

- 335E Human Rights
- 362 Afro-American Struggle for Equality
- 371H Women in America: From the Civil War to the Present
- 384 Work, Workers, and the Working Classes in America
- 466H History of Indian Affairs from 1865

Philosophy

- 201E Political Ethics
- 325E Morality and the Law
- 422E Contemporary Moral and Political Theory

429E Feminist Ethics

Political Science

- 343 Politics of Social Movements
- 355 Theories of Civil Violence
- 468 Public Policy Cycle

Psychology

- 385 Psychology of Family Violence

Social Work

- 323 Women and Social Action in the Americas
- 324 Gender and the Politics of Welfare
- 455S Social Gerontology
- 460 Domestic Violence
- 465 Social Work in a Global Context

Women's Studies

- 263S Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies
- 363 Theories and Methods of Feminist Inquiry

This proposal was reviewed and approved by the affected departments as follows:

Department Name: The Department of Sociology

Date: September 22, 2006

In addition the deans of the following Schools/Colleges reviewed and approved the proposal:

Dean of: The College of Arts and Sciences

Date: October 12, 2006

The proposal was reviewed and approved by the Faculty Senate at the University of Montana Date: December 7, 2006

[No outside consultants were employed for the development of this proposal.]