



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Department of Sociology

# The Socializer

Summer 2010

A Newsletter for Friends of the Western Michigan University Department of Sociology

## Religion and School in Russia: Not an Ideal Mix According to Lisovskaya



*Dr. Elena Lisovskaya presents the 2010 Hugh and Beverly Wamble Lecture in the Cashion Academic Center. In this year's lecture Lisovskaya spoke on orthodoxy, Islam and the desecularization of Russian state schools.*

*Jed Dean | Photo Editor*

The Russian government wants to bring religion into schools, which could bring negative consequences, including student segregation, bullying and a misconception of religions.

Dr. Elena Lisovskaya, a professor at Western Michigan University, spoke about "Orthodoxy, Islam, and the Desecularization of Russian State Schools" at the Sixth Annual Hugh and Beverly Wamble Lecture series, which highlights issues relating to religious freedom. In 2009, Russian president Dmitry Medvedev started an initiative that is attempting to bring religion back into the public schools, Lisovskaya said.

Students have the option of choosing from six different religion classes: Orthodoxy, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, secular ethics and religious history.

Currently, this initiative is in the experimental stage, with 11 out of the 89 regions adopting the change. Lisovskaya said that this type of religious education brings the risk of providing "separate but equal" education, since ethnicity is often linked to religion.

"In Russia, religion and ethnicity are closely intertwined. If you are Russian, chances are high that you will be Orthodox. If you are a Tatar, chances will be that you are Muslim," Lisovskaya said. Lisovskaya said surveys show that among Russians "55 percent agreed that Russia was for ethnic Russians only and 25 percent agreed that immigrants should have restricted rights to live in Russia."

Lisovskaya also expressed concern that the curriculum that the Orthodoxy class uses gives inaccurate information. Other forms of Christianity are not mentioned, and she said that in some instances students are put in the Orthodoxy class with no other choice. "Real education should be culturally oriented, give no preference to religion, and accommodate minorities.

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## Religion and School in Russia

*Continue from page 1*

"These classes should teach about religion, but not instruct students in religious practices," Lisovskaya said. These religion courses will not be taught by clergy. Instead, current teachers who may not be knowledgeable about the religion they are teaching will be trained for a short period of time to teach the course, Lisovskaya said. "I do not think bringing religion back to schools will help students in their spiritual decisions," she said.

Petrenko said that it is unfair to people of other religions who do not have easy access to experts and curricula. "The Orthodox Church does have a way to train teachers of Russian Orthodoxy, but there really is no way for the Buddhist community or the Jews to be able to train the teachers of their courses," Petrenko said.

Dr. Christopher Marsh, Director of the J.M. Dawson Institute of Church-State Studies, said that bullying could become prevalent when students are labeled as "different based on the religion

class they choose to take. "As soon as you do this, you force choice among students. You have little kids who are forced to choose a religion publicly and these little kids can be teased, picked on, beat up," he said.

Dr. Perry Glanzer, associate of the Honors Program, said that the curricula would hurt the church rather than help it.

"It would hurt the Orthodox Church whenever you start coercing certain types of religious education," Glanzer said. "People are going to find out that it will hurt the devotion of students who would otherwise be naturally attracted to the church."

**Published on Feb. 12, 2010 in Baylor University's The Lariat Online, by Lela Atwood, Reporter (link: <http://www.baylor.edu/lariat/news.php?action=story&story=68955>)**



*Dr. Elena Lisovskaya*

# Alumni Corner



Dr. David Piacenti (Ph.D., '09) has accepted a tenure-track position at Metro State College in Denver, Col. for fall 2010. Piacenti's dissertation involved studying the Yucatecos, in Mexico, and the area in Denver is 35% Latino/a, including some Yucatecos. He is looking forward to doing some local, post-census research. Piacenti says, "Thanks for everything you have graciously provided in my program; all the camaraderie, teaching, expertise, funding and research/travel support, and just plain great advice—it is all paying off—I look forward to showing them what WMU Sociology is all about.

Dr. Yashica D. Williams (Ph.D., '06) has accepted a new position for the fall of 2010. She will be moving from the University of Memphis to the University of North Alabama (UNA), Florence, Ala. Williams will join the Department of Criminal Justice, which hosts a bachelor's and a master's program. She will be the third member joining the faculty at UNA.



## Alpha Phi Sigma

### *National Criminal Justice Honor Society Newest Members*

Alpha Phi Sigma is the only Criminal Justice Honor Society for Criminal Justice Majors. The society recognizes academic excellence of undergraduate, graduate students of criminal justice, as well as juris doctorate.



*Pictured, left to right: Dr. Charles Crawford, faculty advisor, Daniel Wlodkowski, Rebecca Schnaar, Melissa Murauka, Zechariah Marco, Diana Bajdo, and Heather Krestik.*

#### *New Members:*

*Diana Bajdo, Canton, Mich.  
Kylie Diekema, Holland, Mich.  
Jeffrey Heyn, Highland, Mich.  
Heather Krestik, Port Huron, Mich.  
Zechariah Marco, Grand Rapids, Mich.  
Melissa Muraoka, Kalamazoo, Mich.  
Rebecca Schnaar, Holly, Mich.  
Daniel Wlodkowski, Katy, Tex.*

## Alpha Kappa Delta

### *The National Honor Society for Sociology New Members*

*Presented by Dr. David Hartmann, Faculty Advisor*

- Alan Cox, Kalamazoo, Mich.
- Emily Kelley, Flint, Mich.
- Rebecca Schnaar, Holly, Mich.
- Daniel Wlodkowski, Katy, Tex.



*Pictured, left to right: Dr. David Hartmann, department chair, Daniel Wlodkowski, Rebecca Schnaar, and Emily Kelley.*

## Kudos to our new M.A. Graduates:

*April 2010 - Codie Wedge*  
*June 2010 - Carolina Calvillo*  
*June 2010 - Kristy Niblock*  
*June 2010 - Shannon Vacek*  
*June 2010 - Lori Jo Verspoor*



*The Wally Post Award for Departmental Service was presented by Dr. David Hartmann (left) to Carrie Buist and Jacquelynn Doyon for all the time and effort they give to the department, including planning and organizing the graduate reception.*

## Departmental Awards:

Presented by Dr. Greg Howard and Dr. David Hartmann

**Graduate Student Teaching Effectiveness Award:** Jacob Armstrong

**All-University Graduate Student Teaching Effectiveness:** Lisa Kruse

**Graduate Research & Creative Scholar Award:** (Ph.D.) David Barry

**Graduate Research & Creative Scholar Award:** (M.A.) Lori Verspoor

**All-University Graduate Research & Creative Scholar Award:** (Ph.D.) Michael Gillespie

**All-University Graduate Research & Creative Scholar Award:** (M.A.) Carolina Calvillo

## Awards for Outstanding Graduate Scholars:

Presented to: Jake Armstrong, David Barry, Elizabeth Bradshaw, Darrick Brake, Nicholas Budimir, Carrie Buist, Carolina Calvillo, Jacquelynn Doyon, Jessica Edel, Kelly Faust, Michael Gillespie, Curtis Hoosier, Lisa Kruse, Zhenia L'eontyeva, David Piacenti, Angela Simon, Adrienne Trier-Bieniek Shannon E. Vacek, Andrew VerHeek, Lori Verspoor, Cynthia Visscher, and Codie Wedge.

## Awards for Outstanding Graduate Teachers:

Presented to: Jacob Armstrong, David Barry, Elizabeth Bradshaw, Darrick Brake, Nicholas Budimir, Carrie Buist, Jacquelynn Doyon, Jessica Edel, Kelly Faust, Tamica Frison, Michael Gillespie, Matthew Klepac, Lisa Kruse, Zhenia L'eontyeva, JD Penn, Lisa Sanders, Adrienne Trier-Bieniek, Cynthia Visscher, and Codie Wedge.

Correction from Fall 2009 Socializer: Dr. Susan Caringella was actually the host and organizer of the Violence Against Women Mini-Conference, which was in tandem with the 4th International Conference on Sociology in Athens Greece. She also presented at the 4th International Conference on Sociology.



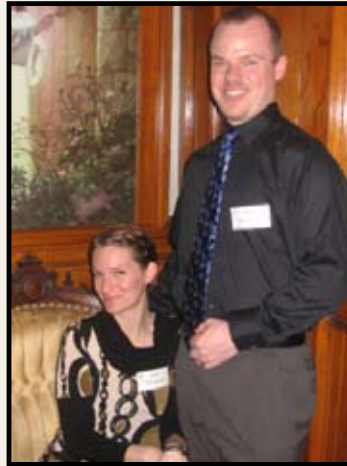
## Graduate Students and Faculty Honored at Reception at Henderson Castle

### Awards from the Graduate Student Association

- Outstanding Faculty Mentor - Dr. Gregory Howard
- Outstanding Mentor, M.A. - Codie Wedge
- Outstanding Student Mentor, Ph.D. - Elizabeth Bradshaw
- Outstanding Ph.D. Instructor - Michael Gillespie
- Outstanding Student Researcher, M.A. - Shannon Vacek
- Outstanding Student Researcher, Ph.D. - Michael Gillespie



Ph.D. candidates Liz Bradshaw and Matthew Klepac.



Laurie Verspoor and husband Tom.



Bird's-eye view of the GSA reception at Henderson Castle.

## Wedding Bells



*Congratulations to Ph.D. candidate, Ladel Lewis on her marriage June 14 to Shalom Williams!*

*Ph.D. candidate Lisa Kruse spent her semester break getting married to Josh Bench. They were married on a cruise on Jan. 4, 2010.*



## Great Expectations



*Proud Parents Dr. Angie Moe and husband Aaron Abl, with their baby girl Josie, born November 2009*

*Zain Samtouni, born November 2009, son of Ph.D. student Michelle-Fether Samtouni and her husband Shem.*



## WMU Presentations at the Joint Annual Meeting of the Midwest Sociological Society and the North Central Sociological Association

*The faculty and graduate students continue to uphold their reputation for outstanding and numerous publications and presentations.*

- “Radical Feminism and Lesbian Battering: Dismantling the Lesbian, Feminist Utopia”—Carrie Buist (WMU)
- “Exploring the Social Construction of Contemporary Tattoo Practices: Symbolic Interactionism, Capital Investments, and the Manufacture of Meaning”—Matthew J. Klepac (WMU)
- “Challenges of Teaching about Race and Ethnicity: Classroom and Personal Struggles in the Search for Creative Approaches”—Shannon Vacek (WMU)
- “Attitudes within the Social Sciences towards Human Subjects Review Boards: The Question of Qualitative Research”—Eric W. Gustafson (WMU) and Megan C. Mullins (Ph.D., 2005), (iEval).
- “Mass Incarceration as Social Harm”—Andrew G. Verheek (WMU)
- “Watching over National History”—Elizabeth A. Bradshaw (WMU)
- “Men, Women and Contraception: Whose Responsibility Is It Anyway?”—Lisa A. Sanders (WMU)
- “The Impact of Human Subjects Review Board Requirements on Student and Classroom Research: Implications for Teaching and Learning”—Megan C. Mullins (WMU, Ph.D., 2005) (iEval), Eric W. Gustafson (WMU), Thomas L. Van Valey (WMU)
- “Religion and Sexuality”—Presider: David M. Barry (WMU)—Organizers: David M. Barry (WMU) and Jacob A. Armstrong (WMU)
- “Issues Regarding Religion and Homosexuality”—David M. Barry and Jacob A. Armstrong (WMU)
- “A Social Psychological Analysis of Battered Women: The Role of Reflected Appraisal”—Jessica R. Edel and Angela Moe (WMU)
- “Teaching a Women, Media, and Violence Course and Building Community in the Classroom”—Zoann K. Snyder, Karolina Jedrzejczak, and Eric W. Gustafson (WMU)
- “I Need A Big Loan from the Girl Zone”: Female Fan Community, Healing, and Music”—Adrienne Trier-Bieniek (WMU)
- “The Use of Camp in Queer Performances: Identity Construction and Appropriation of Privilege”—Shannon Vacek (WMU)
- “Tattooed Women’s Narratives: Constructing Meaning and Identities through Bodies”—Shannon Vacek (WMU)
- “Black Panther Women: An Exploratory Study of Sexism, Chauvinism and the Ideological Shift from 1966–1977”—Michael J. Macaluso (WMU)
- “The Rockin Bodies of Rock of Love: The Post-Feminist Environment of Pro-Sculpting”—Lisa Marie Kruse (WMU)
- “A Visual Analysis of Mainstream and Transgendered Masculinity”—Codie Wedge (WMU)
- “Is There a Promise for Latino Students?”—Carolina Calvillo (WMU)
- “Secularization, Education, and Church Attendance: A Cross-National Comparison”—Yevgeniya A. Leont’eva (WMU)
- “Bellydancing Mommas: Pregnancy, Postpartum and Resistance to Cultural Discourse”—Angela Moe (WMU)
- “Studies in Crime, Deviance, Social Control, and Criminal Justice”—Presider/Organizer: Darrick Brake (WMU)
- “The Middle Class as a Restrictive Identity”—John P. Chew (WMU)
- “Teaching Ethics in the Classroom”—Presider/Organizer: Thomas L. Van Valey (WMU)



Presidential Scholar Amanda Vig with Chair David Hartmann.

**Presidential Scholar**  
Amanda Vig, Fenton Mich.

**Sociology Scholar**  
Joseph Culver, Otsego, Mich.

**Criminal Justice Scholar**  
Brian Fox, Holland, Mich.

**Undergraduate Teaching Assistants**

Rebecca Durkee, Kalamazoo, Mich.  
(for Jessica Edel)

Amy Hassenger, Kalamazoo, Mich.  
(for Dr. Zoann Snyder)

Melissa Muraoka, Kalamazoo, Mich.  
(for Dr. Chien-Ju Gu)

Rebecca Schnaar, Holly, Mich.  
(for Dr. Charles Crawford)

# Accolades to our Undergrads

The 31st Annual Undergraduate Honors Reception was held on April 21, 2010 in the third floor atrium in Sangren Hall. Introductory remarks were given by Dr. David Hartmann, who challenged the students to use what they have learned.

**College of Arts and Sciences Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Award**

Melissa Muraoka, Kalamazoo, Mich.

**Lanny Wilde Scholarship**

Michael Schumacher, Wyoming, Mich.  
(Fall 2009)

Andrew Teschendorf, South Lyon, Mich. (Spring 2010)

**Stanley S. and Helenann S. Robin Scholarship**

Emily Kelley, Wixom, Mich.

**Leonard C. Kercher Award**

Jacquelynn Dezess, Clarkston, Mich.



Dr. Chien-Ju Gu, faculty advisor (left) and Melissa Muraoko, recipient of the College of Arts and Sciences Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Award.



Dr. David Hartmann, chair and Emily Kelley, recipient of the Stanley S. and Helenan S. Robin Scholarship.

## Undergraduate Updates

- Ryan Zank, Sociology (B.A., '10) has accepted a position with Grace Healthcare as a Nursing Home Administrator.
- Kylie Diekema, Criminal Justice (B.A., '10) will be starting a position with the State Police Department in Alaska in the fall. Kylie is a member of Alpha Phi Sigma, the National Criminal Justice Honor Society.



# Presentations

## *Dr. Zoann Snyder*

- Presented “Building a Culture of Assessment with Sociology Students” at the Atlantic Assessment Conference in April (Cary, N.C.).
- Participated in the 4th Annual International conference on Sociology, May 10-13, 2010 in Athens, Greece. The conference was sponsored by The Sociology Research Unit of the Athens Institute for Education and Research.
- Presented a paper, “Feminists in the International Community: Women Prisoners as Research Participants”. She also chaired a session, “Violence Against Women”. She received a travel grant from the Diether H. Haenicke Institute for Global Education.



*Zoann Snyder in Greece at the Hadrian's Arch.*



*Chien-Juh Gu*

## *Dr. Chien-Juh Gu*

Gave a keynote speech, “Family Relations and Psychological Well-being among Taiwanese Immigrant Women,” at the annual conference of Illinois Council on Family Relations in March (DeKalb, Ill.).

## *Dr. Vyacheslav Karpov*

Was invited to give a lecture at The Keston Center for Religion, Politics, and Society at Baylor University on the topic titled, “How do Orthodox Christians Read and Interpret the Bible? Findings from Russia and Comparative Research.”



*Vyacheslav Karpov*



*Elena Lisovskaya*

## *Dr. Elena Lisovskaya*

Was invited to give the annual 2010 Hugh and Beverly Wamble Lecture at The J.M. Dawson Institute of Church-State Studies, Baylor University on “Orthodoxy, Islam, and the Desecularization of Russian State Schools”. (See full article on p. 1)

## **Obituary**

Sam Seymour King died March 9, 2010, at the Rose Arbor Hospice in Kalamazoo MI. He was born May 24, 1924 in Chicago, Ill. He served in the U.S. Army during WWII and then attended the University of Illinois and received a B.S. in Journalism. In 1995, Sam earned his Ph.D. in Sociology.

After he graduated he began teaching at WMU’s Department of Sociology, and also taught courses in Lee Honors College. In addition to the standard sociology courses, he specialized in and developed a comprehensive course in the Holocaust.

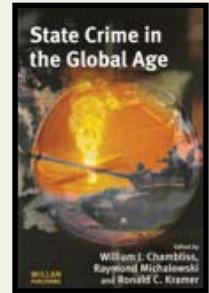
Sam’s son David says, “I can tell you from personal experience that the most meaningful and fulfilling years of my dad’s life were those he spent teaching at WMU—he really loved that time.”



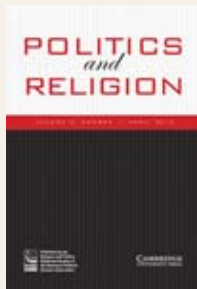
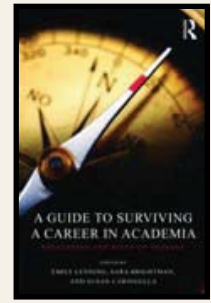
# Publications

## Books

A new book edited by Dr. Ronald C. Kramer, "State Crime in the Global Age" with an article from Dr. Dawn Rothe (Ph.D., '06), was published by Willan Publishing (UK) (April 2010). Amazon.com writes: "State Crime in the Global Age" brings together original writings from leading scholars in the field that explore the many ways that the use and abuse of state power results in grave social harms that outweigh, by far, the consequences of ordinary street crime."



Dr. Emily Lenning (Ph.D., '07), Sara Brightman (A.B.D.), and Dr. Susan Caringella, Professor of Sociology authored a book, "A guide to Surviving a Career in Academia: Navigating the Rites of Passage," published by Routledge, publication date: Aug. 27, 2010 (available for pre-order). Taylor and Francis Group writes: "A Guide to Surviving a Career in Academia' is written from a feminist perspective, and draws on the information offered in workshops conducted at national meetings like the American Society of Criminology and the Society for the Study of Social Problems.



## Journals

Elena Lisovskaya and Vyacheslav Karpov, "Orthodoxy, Islam, and the Desecularization of Russia's State Schools," *Politics and Religion* 3, 2 (2010): 1-27. This article explores the social origins and consequences of Orthodox-Muslim tensions surrounding the attempts to find a place for religion in Russia's state schools. The survey data indicate that public support for religious instruction in state-run schools has reached high levels and is infused with a noticeable element of religious intolerance.



Sarah Musham DeWard (B.S., '04) and Angela M. Moe, "'Like a Prison!': Homeless Women's Narratives of Surviving Shelter," *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*, 37/(1). Relying on field observation and 20 qualitative interviews with shelter residents, this article examines how the bureaucracy and institutionalization within a homeless shelter fits various tenets of Goffman's (1961) "total institution," particularly with regard to systematic deterioration of personhood and loss of autonomy.

# Ph.D. Candidate and Owner of Flint Flames, Ladel Lewis, Promotes Literacy in Hometown of Flint

Ph.D. candidate Ladel Lewis takes her job as owner of the Flint Flames seriously. She also takes promoting literacy to the young people in her hometown of Flint, Mich. seriously.

A Flint Northern grad, Lewis helped the Vikings win back-to-back state titles in 1994 and 1995, Lewis now owns the Flint Flames—a Women’s semi-professional basketball team that plays in the Womens’ Blue Chip Basketball League and will enter its second season this year.

Lewis’ decision to bring women’s professional basketball to Flint last year had as much to do with the love of her hometown as it did with her love of the sport. “A lot of time, people talk about the negativity in Flint, but they don’t talk about the solutions,” said Lewis, who holds the titles of owner, general and operations manager. “I thought that I’d help fill that gap. For a lot of women, they go to other cities to be a part of teams of this nature, to get exposed. Instead of people going away from Flint to pursue their dreams, why can’t we have people remain in Flint and come to Flint to pursue their dreams?”

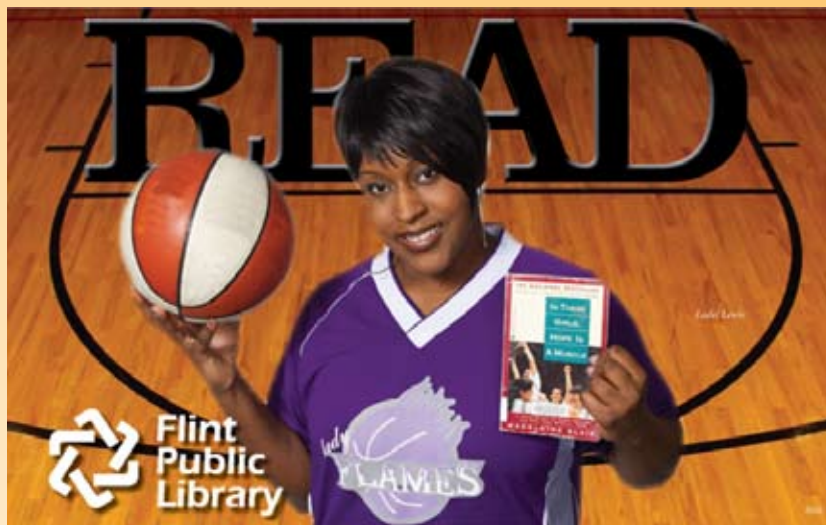
For Lewis, the goal along with the Flames has been to make the team a positive staple in the community by forming partnerships with other organizations, high school and youth teams and highlighting the rich history of women’s basketball in Flint, which has produced stars like Olympic gold medalist and former professional player Pam McGee and WNBA Finals MVP Deanna Nolan.

This year, the Flames will start a new scholarship program for area female athletes who have played at least two years of a varsity sport, have a 2.7 grade point average or better and also participate in some type of community service.

The flames will reach out to area youths by holding a free youth clinic that will feature men’s and women’s professional players teaching basketball skills. The team will continue its “Food Bank Sundays” promotion where fans get in free to Sunday games for donating food or money to the Eastern Michigan Food Bank. “We’re really looking for the community to buy in,” Lewis said. “If the community doesn’t support this, we will not succeed.”

Lewis is never idle, as she currently shares her time between Flint and Kalamazoo where she works as a program evaluator at Western Michigan University and is working on her dissertation to complete her Ph.D.

—Patrick Hayes | The Flint Journal



Ladel Lewis is a Ph.D. candidate at Western Michigan University majoring in Sociology with specializations in Applied Sociology and Race and Ethnicity. Lewis earned a B.A. in Criminal Justice from the University of Michigan and an M.A. in Sociology from Western Michigan University.

# Alumni Information Update

## We want to hear from you!

Our strong suit is our alumni. In each issue, we will focus on YOU, So PLEASE consider yourself selected for upcoming issues. We enjoy receiving your announcements: marriages, job changes, presentations, promotions, advanced degrees, etc. All you need to do is fill out any portion of the form below (with a picture, if possible) to [ann.browning@wmich.edu](mailto:ann.browning@wmich.edu), or mail to Newsletter Editor, Department of Sociology, 2406 Sangren Hall, 1903 West Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5257.



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Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Job title \_\_\_\_\_

Work address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

If alumni, degree and year: \_\_\_\_\_

Tell us more about yourself, and/or what you would like to see in future newsletters:

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Check us out on the web at: [www.wmich.edu/sociology](http://www.wmich.edu/sociology)



# Yes, I want to support the WMU Department of Sociology!

As our student numbers continue to grow, in a time when state funding is increasingly restricted, the support we receive from friends and alumni is vitally important. Such funds are used to take advantage of new or unbudgeted opportunities in order to enhance the teaching or the research of the department.

**Thank you for considering a gift to the WMU Department of Sociology.**

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