

Dear New and Prospective Students:

On behalf of the Sociology Graduate Student Association, I would like to welcome you to our department. We hope that you will find our organization, the SGSA, to be a useful resource for all of your needs. As you come up with questions and encounter new challenges, we hope you think of us as a friendly ally.

We have a sizeable graduate student body (over 60 people), but we maintain a feeling of being at a small school. This is partly accomplished through our “cohort” mentality, and nourished through frequent social interactions. Graduate students have an open door policy and take the time to listen to one another. Our student mentor program is a helpful way to become integrated into the department, and to meet people in other cohorts. We also host several seminars throughout the year on a number of topics, such as how to write a thesis or dissertation, and how to get published. These are useful seminars for graduate and academic life in general.

Members of our faculty are an extremely diverse bunch, and are recognized internationally for their distinguished work. Because of their broad range of interests, we find that we can accommodate student interests more than most other departments, which may specialize in only two or three areas. Diversity is the bedrock of our department.

Most students find that there are numerous opportunities in both teaching and research projects. We also have a faculty mentor program that is designed to make acquaintances smoother and to help overcome some of the initial apprehension both students and professors experience from time to time. Many of us were timid about approaching the faculty, but found that when we did so there was a world of opportunity waiting for us.

The SGSA is the graduate student organization setup to support you in any way possible. We all have social, emotional, and of course, financial needs. The SGSA provides for all three. Through our affiliation with the University Graduate Student Association, we are able to provide supplemental travel funds to assist you in attending professional meetings. We can also help you locate resources external to the organization.

If you are a new student, we hope you are as thrilled as we are that you have joined our department. If you are a prospective student, we hope that you will seriously consider our department. If you have any questions, you may contact me personally at the email address below, or check our website, <http://sa.ncsu.edu/sgsa>.

Best Wishes,

Greg Fulkerson, *SGSA President*

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