



Stony Brook University  
College of Arts and Sciences

## Department of Sociology

As always, we hope you all continue to be well.

We are well into the Fall semester, and despite the continued challenges the pandemic brings, many of us have returned to campus to teach courses for our undergraduate and graduate students. It is nice for us to actually see our colleagues in person and interact with our students on a regular basis. It allows for a greater sense of community, which many of us lost over the last year. Connecting virtually, although useful, does not allow for more organic human interaction. We were also able to have our beginning of the year Sociology Party!

On October 6, we were fortunate to have an alum, Dr. Aldon Morris, give a prestigious College of Arts and Sciences [Sir Run Run Shaw Series](#) lecture. Dr. Morris earned his PhD from our Department in 1980 and is currently the Leon Forrest Professor of Sociology and African American Studies at Northwestern University. He spoke about his recent book: [The Scholar Denied: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Birth of Modern Sociology](#). Dr. Morris reshapes the historical emergence of scientific sociology in the United States by centering W.E.B. Du Bois as the founding father of American sociology, despite the fact that Du Bois was disparaged and ignored by fellow scholars of the time. This groundbreaking work calls into question the prevailing narrative that American sociology was founded by white scholars in elite, white universities. We were excited to have him speak on his important and transformative research!



For the remainder of this newsletter, we want to honor two individuals in our Department who are retiring. Both Wanda Vega and Norm Goodman have been with the Department nearly from the beginning, and they both played a central role in building the program. This past September, we honored Wanda Vega at our Sociology party, where we presented her with a book of memories from previous and current graduate students, staff, and faculty. It was very nice to have many Sociology community members present to show Wanda their gratitude. In addition, we celebrated Norman Goodman's 56 years

at Stony Brook University on August 20, 2021. During this virtual event, it was announced that the Senate Conference Office would be named after him to acknowledge his dedication to shared governance at Stony Brook and SUNY. We are grateful to have had such great individuals as members of this Department.

**Wanda Vega:**

Wanda Vega retired from our Department on August 6, 2021. We will miss her! I know both our current and former graduate students will especially miss Wanda.

Wanda was at SBU, and in our Department, for most of her lifetime. She started at SBU as a Sr. Stenographer in 1973! For those who don't know, a stenographer translates speech into shorthand. She worked in Human Resources for six months before she joined the Department of Sociology. Of course, over the years her title changed, and she retired as an Administrative Assistant. Wanda's role in our Department was an important one. When staff around the University think of Sociology's graduate program, they often think of Wanda at its core. She is highly respected by other graduate coordinators and enthusiastically served as a resource for them.



Importantly, Wanda is the one person our graduate students always counted on to give them the advice they needed to make it through our PhD program. She was consistently patient and offered a reassuring presence to our students – many of whom were foreign, living in a distant land, and learning a new language and culture. Faculty and graduate students always knew that they could depend on Wanda for information and support. Over the years, she taught our Graduate Program Directors the ropes. She would explain different processes, and they all quickly learned of her deep connection to the graduate students. If the program directors had questions about a graduate student, Wanda would often pick up the phone and call the student. The conversation often began with a warm “Hi honey, how are you doing?” Wanda was the mother and matriarch for the graduate students, not only helping them navigate, but also looking out for their well-being. When any of us meet former graduate students, one of the first things they often ask is, “How is Wanda?” She has been and continues to be loved.

Wanda has left a legacy of knowledge and compassion, and I want to take this moment to thank Wanda for everything she has done for the Department and especially for all of the graduate students through the years. Thank you, Wanda!

**Norm Goodman:**

Norm was one of the early members of this Department, and he was active in shaping it from the beginning, as he joined in 1964. He was Chair from 1973 – 1989 and from 2000 – 2004. During this time, he sought to recruit others to the Department. For example, he spent a year in England, where he met Ian Roxborough and encouraged him to apply and join the Department. He also hired Patricia Bremer, who we know is central to keeping this Department running.



Outside of Sociology, Norm was involved in faculty senate and SUNY activities. Over the years, he was a Senator, President and Vice President of the Senate, and editor of the SUNY University Senate Bulletin for more than 20 years. He was also active in the Executive Committee and Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation, among others. Norm was the first person in SUNY to be awarded two distinguished professorships – one for service and one for teaching. Last year, Norm celebrated 55 years of service!

Because of his length of time at SBU and his active engagement in the University, Norm advised the Department in decisions based on his institutional memory and firsthand knowledge of the procedures and policies.

Thank you, Norm, for all of your contributions!

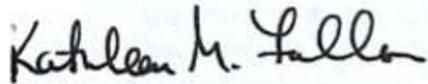
**Thank you for your support!**

We appreciate the support so many of you have provided to our Department, especially to our [Sociology Fund](#). Your generosity has been significantly helpful in financially supporting our graduate students' summer research programs. With the high cost of living on Long Island, many of our students work second jobs, which often leads them to delay their research. If you are interested in learning how you can support our students and

programs, please feel free to contact Chris Scarpati, Director of Development, at 631.632.1202.

As always, we enjoy hearing from all of you. If there are any stories you would like us to share, please reach out to me and we will include them in our next newsletter. In the meantime, please stay connected with us on [Twitter](#).

Wishing you all the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen M. Fallon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light blue shadow effect behind the text.

Kathleen M. Fallon  
Professor and Chair  
Department of Sociology